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A typical mission in China

A MISSION IN CHINA

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A TYPICAL MISSION IN CHINA

By

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To

HER

WITHOUT WHOM THE WORK HEREIN

RECORDED WOULD NOT HAVE

BEEN ACCOMPLISHED,

AND TO

THE TWO

FROM WHOM WIDE SEAS DIVIDE.

PREFACE

THIS book is written chiefly for those who, through many years, have loyally lent their support to the work recorded in the following pages, and whose right it is to know more fully that their faith has been met with faithfulness. It was commenced eighteen months ago in response to repeated requests, and with numerous and prolonged periods of interruption, its compilation has occupied the spare moments of that length of time.

Herein are recounted some of the experiences met with, and methods followed during nearly a quarter of a century's work amongst the Chinese, a work that has been rewarded by nearly ten thousand conversions, and an increasing confidence in the universal advent of the Kingdom of God.

Its principal object is to depict our own Mission, as typical of many others. In addition five chapters will be found at the end, giving in brief an account of the Chinese religions, religions so involved and mutually intermingled that close investigation and considerable reading have been necessary to anything like a clear and succinct delineation. The whole closes with a short history of Christianity in China.

It is the misfortune of a book of this character that great demands are made on the first personal pronoun. If the reader finds that letter too oft repeated, his sympathy is craved in consideration of the number of times it has been suppressed.

Chapter and verse for passages quoted have not been deemed necessary, but grateful acknowledgment is hereby made of help received from Williams' "Middle Kingdom,"

Legge's "Religions of China" and his "Chinese Classics," Canon MacClatchie's "Chinese Cosmogony" and his "Yih King," Eitel's "Lectures on Buddhism," Sir Monier Williams' "Buddhism," Balfour's "Chwang-tsz," the China Missions' Handbook, and Abbé Huc's "Christianity in China."

To my brother, the Rev. Alfred Soothill, B.A., I am indebted for seeing this book through the press. As he has never been in China he undertakes a large responsibility, and I cheerfully leave him to bear the brunt of all criticism, both of his errors and my own.

Methodist Free Church Mission,
Wenchow, China, *February* 1906.

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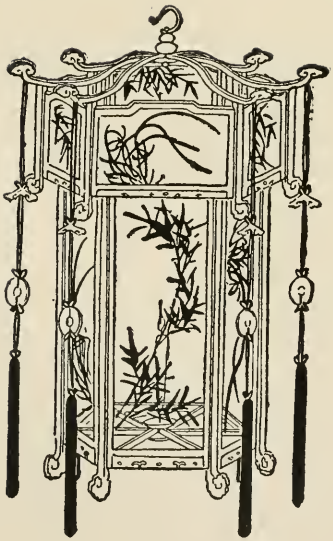

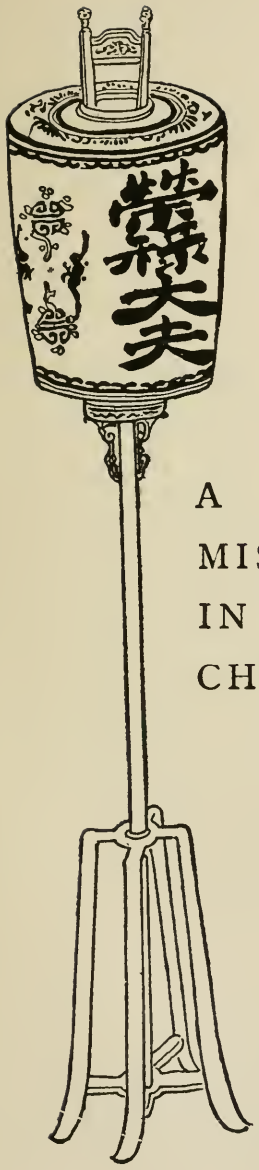

A MISSION IN CHINA

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I

INTRODUCTORY: THE MISSIONARY

"Many are the called, but few"—choose.

THE first requisite of a Mission is a missionary, and the first essential of a missionary is his "call." Training may add much, but, apart from that inward call which presses from the resisting heart the hard-wrung response, "Here am I, Lord, send me," training profiteth little. How many are the called God alone knows. How few are the chosen every missionary knows too well. As with swelling heart he looks around on his vast parish, and down upon his own feeble hands, what would be his despair without the conviction that God had sent him!

Yet the number of men in and out of the ministry, who have at one time or another heard the call, resisted it until they "made sure," and lived to regret when too late is far from small. A President of the Free Church Council, for instance, a man honoured above his fellows, in his opening address confessed with intense emotion, "For myself, my greatest mistake in life is that I did not go out as a missionary. I would give the world now to have done it." Of such the ministry knows not a few. Thank God for the noble work he and they have done at home; the kingdom of heaven is richer for it; but their urgent message to younger brethren is, "Quench not the Spirit."

Nor need this message be confined entirely to the one who has heard the Voice, for it applies with equal force to ministers and others who take it upon themselves to hinder the direct action of the Spirit. Ministers of the Gospel are the mainstay of Missions. Few know as well as the missionary what self-sacrifice they cheerfully make for the extension of the kingdom of heaven abroad, but unbounded though their sympathy is,

not all of them display it wisely. Nearly a quarter of a century ago, an able minister, whom we will call " D.D.," for he had been honoured with that degree many years, hearing of my offer for China, urgently advised me not to go there, but, if I must be a missionary, to go to Japan, as the Japanese were so very much pleasanter to live amongst than the " dirty Chinese." A young minister, eminently fitted for the field, once offered for a certain Mission. By request he consulted two ministers of experience, and both ventured to " quench the Spirit," on the ground that he had received special training for the home work—as if his special training would have been wasted abroad!

Again, the condition of mind of many who ought to know better, is evidenced by a left-handed compliment once paid to a very intimate friend of mine, by a minister for whom I have a high esteem, and who, if he has any recollection of the incident, will forgive my introducing it here for purposes of general enlightenment. Standing on the steps of Exeter Hall, out of the kindness of his heart, he said, " I am surprised *you* went to China. Why, you would have done well at home ! " Alas, poor Yorick ! Misunderstood by the heathen abroad and his friends at home. As if any decent missionary goes out through fear of failure in England ! What young man of twenty-one is troubled with such fears ? Are they not the fruit of riper experience ?

Let no blame attach to the above-named minister for this attitude of mind. His views were not uncommon a few years ago, but are, we trust, now dying out along with the " romance of Missions." Happily we are, at last, reaching the practical, business stage, and Mission Boards see clearly that a man only suited to an inferior post at home is hardly fit to be the chosen representative of the Church amongst the intelligent and critical races of the Orient.

Given, then, the call and the willing surrender, there can be no regrets. Should death come soon, 'tis but an earlier and a higher call, a more complete surrender. Should, as sometimes happens, not life, but only a part of it—the sacrifice of buoyant health—be the price of his vocation, then, the loss of the whole being greater than the loss of its part, a grateful heart still gives thanks for the much or little that can be done with what is left.

None the less, however, is it the duty of every Missionary

Society—with funds too limited for the pressure of its claims, much less of its dreams—to make health a question of moment. Moreover, its responsibility to its supporters, and even to the applicant himself is sufficiently weighty, without adding an unnecessary failure to the burden. Residence in a tropical climate may speedily develop an already existing organic disease, which in a milder zone might have lain dormant for a lifetime. Hence, the Board must accept its Medical Officer's advice, or dismiss him.

Albeit, he who has definitely surrendered himself to the call, will recognise that doctors are not infallible, and will not complacently submit to the first adverse medical opinion he receives. There are men at home who have hidden their joy at escape behind half a sheet of doctor's notepaper, without any attempt to seek confirmation, or otherwise, from a practitioner of wider experience, perhaps, who has himself lived on the field to which they were called. There are other men, who, in defiance of medical advice, have gone abroad to live lives of useful service, some even improving in health thereby.

Let him, therefore, who has heard the Divine Voice calling, not lightly hearken to a human voice forbidding. Though not suited to one field, he may be to another; and even should human opinion finally close all other doors, there yet remains open at home a door, "great and effectual," for serving the field abroad. Thus, he may still answer the call by a surrender, which, though possessed of less glamour, and withal of less to enervate, yet contains within it the possibility of equal service. When a man hears the Divine Voice, let him offer for the field to which it calls, and let him so surrender himself that a first, or even a second refusal will not be accepted as final. Should his perseverance not be rewarded, he may justifiably recognise that God has indeed called him for life service in the Foreign Office at home.

THE KIND OF MAN required abroad varies as much as at home. Three qualities, however, are essential to every successful worker, True Piety, Common-Sense, and Enthusiasm; two more are also called for in almost equal degree, a good ear for vowel and consonant sounds, and ability to express his meaning clearly.

1. There is a spurious piety which emasculates a man, and

makes even a native "despise" his "youth." And there is a true piety despised by none, which ennobles its possessor and makes him a "MAN in Christ Jesus." Blatancy and forwardness will never be prominent features in the life of one moved by true piety. He neither strives nor cries, and perhaps his voice is not heard in the streets, but he keeps his soul before God and his character before men, and so doing, whatever influences surround, he is strong—strong enough to transform them.

Without manly piety, the powers of paganism around him will, as they do so many of his countrymen in exile, draw down the tide of his spiritual and even moral life to lowest ebb, leaving him stranded, a virtual wreck. Seldom will he find those external buttresses of faith and virtue to which he has all his life been accustomed; within himself, and in the silent heavens above, he must find all his soul requires. He goes to be the light of his surrounding world, a light which makes the encircling darkness but the gloomier, black enough to quench any light not fed direct from the Great Source of Radiant Life. To spiritual leadership he is called; in inspiring others his life must be spent. Alas! for the man who has known but borrowed light; whose radio-activity has been derived solely from meeting with his fellow-Christians, and who has never known the enriching power of the chamber of the soul, the Communion with Him who seeth in secret and rewardeth in the open with ennobling influence and magnetic power.

Not only is there little to help and cheer, but on every side are eyes, many eyes, eyes which apparently see nothing, yet which see everything; and lips which, behind his back, probably nickname him for whatever peculiarity asserts itself. One man of my acquaintance was known as "Old wait-a-bit," because of his habit of procrastination; another as "Turnip-head," because of his obtuseness; and a few months ago I read of three others, living in the same compound, who were respectively known as "Bath every day man," "Bath once a week man," and "Never bath at all man." But better be known as procrastinating or dense, or even unwashed, than be known as "Angry Face," as another was dubbed, in consequence of his frequent exhibitions of ire. One such, no longer in China, was detested by the Chinese, and despised by his colleagues, for his

fits of bad temper; the irritability of the East was too often upon him.

"Wine, women, wealth, and wrath" are the four vices as enumerated by the Chinese, and the passionate nature of the people justifies the inclusion of "wrath" in the quartette. Hence, there is much in what a native clergyman, the Rev. Y. K. Yen, said at the Shanghai Missionary Conference in 1890, "China is a poor place for a missionary to come to, in order to learn patience." How much there is to try the temper every missionary knows, for his life is full of petty irritation, and well is it if he can bear constantly in mind that with his own character he builds his church. "Like parson, like people" is nowhere so true as in the Mission field. There are numbers of converts who are amusing copies of their pastors, idiosyncrasies and all.

Let it not be thought from the exceptional instances of crotchetiness given above that such is a common characteristic of missionaries, for in point of fact there is no more forbearing set of men in the world than they. Moreover, no man, not even the gentle reader, is justified in thinking himself incapable of such lapse from grace. The men referred to, despite their peculiar way of showing it, loved the Lord and their fellow-men as much as the reader does, but, like himself, they had "this treasure in earthen vessels." Tropical heat, malaria, dyspepsia, liver—how easily they cause aberration from that courtesy and kindliness which are a mark of manliness and true piety! And how readily these physical depressors receive the blame, instead of it being cast on neglect of self-discipline before the Throne of the Heavenly Grace! True piety begins at home, in the heart; and not possessed of this, whatever his other gifts, the missionary will bring men to change their altars with but little change of character.

The first year or two of a missionary's life are often the most miserable in his career—much loneliness, much heartache, many a suppressed tear; but let him remember that "he that endureth to the end shall be saved" to a great salvation.

2. Good common business sense is of much more value than any amount of irresponsible zeal. Without it, the missionary will only too easily become the tool of crafty natives, who will play upon his susceptible kindness and his hatred of oppression,

until he has done injustice to many in assisting one, probably unworthy of his aid. Without common-sense he will indiscriminately treat all creeds as equally effective for salvation, or will become a faddist, and make some minor doctrine an essential article of faith, putting all men on to his tight-rope track, where few except himself can balance.

A devoted and godly man, who had lived some years in a lonely out-station, recently hesitated about continuing his work. He feared that every Chinaman to whom he delivered his message, and who did not become converted, was thereby doomed to an unending hell. This gloomy thought took all the joy from his preaching. He had become morbid, nor can we seriously blame him; the weight of the heathen had so pressed in upon him that he had forgotten he was commissioned to proclaim, not a sentence of condemnation, but "glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

Without common-sense, a missionary will neglect his own health and become a burden to his colleagues, his friends, and himself, as did a certain young man, who on being urged to wear a sun-hat and carry an umbrella, smiled serenely, and quoted, "The sun shall not smite thee by day." The recorder says that he is now at home with an enfeebled brain, which, one surmises, can never have been very strong.

Without common-sense, a man will change his methods of work so often that his people are quite unable to keep pace with him, or, on the other hand, he may become so conservative that his Church will become as lifeless as himself. There are "cranks" at home; there are "cranks" also in the Mission field; and few of them succeed in doing enough good work with one hand to cover the harm they do with the other.

3. Enthusiasm, energy, enterprise are as indispensable to a successful missionary as they are to a successful business man. Who has not known the man of robust piety and good judgment, who, nevertheless, when upon his feet was utterly dead-alive? Who has not known the man, otherwise admirable, whose slowness and deliberation have taken all the life out of his sermons? Such an individual is trying enough in England, but the man who is to convince the unsympathetic pagan must himself first be fired with his message before he can warm the pagan heart. There are good men on the Mission field whose

dulness and lack of glow from the first impress upon the pagan that this religion of Jesus Christ is a lifeless, soulless thing of no use to him. The man is good, the message is good, but both are wearisomely dreary. Of all men in the world, the missionary is the very last who can afford to be without inspiration and inspiring energy. The object of his coming is to put life into the dead, and all the hot enthusiasm of an ardent zeal is called into play to ensure success. "The kingdom of heaven is gotten by violence, and the violent take it by force." The dull, dreary man, uninspired and uninspiring, is hopeless as a leader, for *his* voice will never awaken the dead. If he have private means, he may be useful on the field as an auxiliary, but societies cannot afford to send such men to the front as officers.

4. A good ear for consonant and vowel sounds, while not such a *sine quâ non* to success as the two preceding qualifications, is nevertheless a necessity to effectiveness in preaching and teaching. A man of judgment may, with inferior linguistic talents, superintend even admirably the work of others, but both in pulpit and desk he will be severely handicapped. Men who cannot learn to enunciate their own language correctly have but limited success with another tongue.

The first study of infancy is pronunciation, followed by the alphabet. In like manner the first study of an oriental language is, or should be, phonetics, and an alphabetic mode of writing them. Professor Sayce, in pointing out the enormous saving that would result, both in time and money, from the introduction into our home schools of a reformed phonetic system, tells us that it is not so much a reformed system of spelling that is needed as a reformed alphabet, and of this the linguist abroad is painfully aware. There are many words, oriental and occidental, that can be spelt but very approximately with twenty-six letters, and a man trained only in our chaotic English alphabet will find his ear much exercised in discovering those shades of sound, without a knowledge of which his speech will be but "pidgin" to the end of his career.

Moreover, a knowledge of the value of the aspirate is of really first-rate importance, where, as a missionary has recently pointed out, the difference between "Ye-su ai wo" and "Ye-su

hai wo" makes all the difference between "Jesus loves me" and "Jesus harms me," and where unaspirated *tien* means "mad," while aspirated *t'ien* means "heaven." Faults of this description are even worse than being the possessor of a brogue, for these alter the entire meaning of the word, whereas brogue is largely a matter of intonation. A German, a Frenchman, a Scotchman—perhaps, if we confessed the truth, an Englishman also—can often be recognised through his very best Chinese. There is an old story recently resurrected by the above-named missionary, which tells of a Scotchman unacquainted with Chinese, who went to hear a fellow-countryman preach to his converts. On coming away he is said to have enthusiastically declared that he had listened to the finest bit of Scotch he had heard since leaving "the tail o' the Bank." A brogue may be forgiven, for it is mostly intonation, but mispronunciation leads to much misunderstanding. As a test of ability, therefore, a short course of phonetics, Pitman's or some other, with a teacher of languages, will soon give the candidate evidence of his capacity to learn.

A musical ear, while always advantageous, may be dispensed with, for good musicians are found with the most rudimentary ideas of enunciation, and excellent linguists are also met with whose only lapse from linguistic grace is when they pronounce m-u-s-i-c—"discord."

When a missionary has learnt the language so well that he can mix in all kinds of company and understand their conversation, his life has many compensations. The Chinese sometimes say of a man who has thoroughly learnt their language, "Why! he even understands our swear words"—in itself a liberal education, although *not* one of the compensations. To stand before an unsympathetic, even semi-hostile crowd, and, after telling of the love of God and His salvation, hear the crowd, all the opposition evaporated out of it, breathe an audible sigh and ask for more—that is one of the compensations, perhaps the greatest.

A man with a command of the language can ensure attention, even under circumstances that would be resented in an indifferent speaker. Imagine, though as a most unusual example of missionary methods, the following scene:—

A Chinese street; a conjurer showing off his tricks, probably

the famous mango trick amongst them; a crowd standing around him. A missionary steps up with books to sell and a message to deliver. The crowd marks his presence, but is, like the missionary himself, interested in the growing mango tree. The conjurer finishes. The collection has been taken several times—before the completion of each trick—so the missionary will not be robbing the artist by availing himself of the assembled crowd. Some one asks him if foreigners can do such clever tricks as these. "Would you like to see me do one?" he asks. The crowd presses round, and will be delighted to see the foreigner do a trick. "Can you take your teeth out and put them back again?" he asks a man with a mouth full of gleaming ivories. "Well *I* can—there!" and out they come. "Ah-ya!" says the crowd. In they go again, and "Ah-ya! ah-ya! it cries again. "Shall I now take off my head for you?" he asks. "Oh no, your honour, no-o-o-o!" says the crowd. "Well, here I have some books that help a man to do something more wonderful than take out his teeth, or even unhinge his head. They tell how to change the heart of a man, and make him love good rather than evil." And so on.

An indifferent speaker could not have performed this little play, and had he attempted it would probably have left behind an impression more productive of harm than his books of good.

5. Lucidity, or the ability to express thought clearly, is a gift of great value to every preacher, and especially to the missionary. He finds the famous Frenchman's *mot*, that language is meant to hide thought, of very little comfort, for his thought is already hidden without need of further screen. Phrase-makers, and those with whom a flow of words counts for ideas, find themselves lost when they have lost their vocabulary. When what little thought there may be is robbed of its flowery garb and picturesque verbiage, and demands expression in the simplest of terms, then a man realises the value of clearness of thought and expression. An intelligent Chinaman was once heard discussing the respective merits of two missionaries. "Mr Jones does keep to his text," he said, "but Mr Brown—whoever can make out what he is driving at! To begin with, it is difficult to understand his speech, and as to what he means we haven't the least idea." From

which it is evident that your Chinaman, even if he cannot himself preach, knows what preaching should be. It is given to few to be eloquent in their own tongue ; it is given to fewer still to be eloquent in a foreign tongue ; but if a man has ideas to express, and can express them clearly in English, it augurs well for his clearness of expression in another language, and lucidity is an excellent substitute for oratory. Choiceness of phraseology is reasonably expected at home—lucidity, by preference, abroad.

Given, then, these foundation qualities, let College and Professor add as much as the man is capable of receiving, for the more his natural qualifications are developed the better is he likely to do his work.

Whether the day is dawning when Free Churchmen will have as intelligent ideas in regard to the politics of the kingdom of heaven as they have of " the United Kingdom " time will soon show. What is there but deplorable obtuseness, and lack of the charity and spirit of Christ, to prevent the union of all our denominational Mission Boards in one powerful Free Church Board of Foreign Missions, under the auspices of the Free Church Council ! The " foreign policy " of the kingdom of heaven might then receive consideration adequate to the enormous interests involved. " Not by might, nor by power," says one ; no, but " that they all may be one," was the pleading and reiterated cry of our Lord on the very eve of His crucifixion, in the only extenso prayer of His that has been bequeathed to His Church.

Were the Church awake to this its glorious Day of Opportunity, it would merge its secondary items of difference in a mighty foreign policy that would embrace the world. If an aggressive foreign policy is able to unite a divided nation, why not the divided Church ? A first step towards such a supreme consummation might very well be made in the establishment of a College for Missionaries in Oxford or Cambridge. There, candidates from all the Churches could receive a year or more of special training, under the guidance of men versed in Comparative Religions and the science of Mission work, while, at the same time they would have opportunity for linguistic study, under the direction of eminent resident Professors of oriental languages. Moreover, there are

always missionaries on furlough to lecture on the practical side of the work.

It is hard for an untrained young man to go, say, to China, and be cast, possibly alone, into a Chinese city, surrounded by men, mostly pagan, who see nothing of the power that struggles for expression in his broken language. A *man* will always sooner or later reveal his *virtus*, his manliness. His very responsibility helps him, for he knows that he is not only "the representative of the West," but the vicar, the representative of Christ. Nevertheless, the man who is a man is vastly the better for training; the weak brother absolutely needs it. A missionary, speaking of his own Mission, once observed, "It is not so much more men we need as more Man." Certain it is that a year with his fellows would develop the manliness in many a youth whom even a pagan feels he can despise; and the Church can only afford to send out fools of the Pauline type.

As Robert Speer, the present able Secretary of the American Presbyterian Missionary Society, puts it, the men needed are those, "who can furnish the most powerful sympathetic ties between East and West, at a time when diplomacy and commerce are irritating and alienating," and "who are fitted for the establishment, organisation, and direction of great national churches, which are to surpass in membership all the present Churches of the West."

Let no man despair, however, who possesses the qualifications indicated in this chapter, not even though he has no opportunity of going to College. The Mission field is an admirable University, with many Professors, black, white, and yellow, all fully qualified to teach him many things he does not know, and, above all, how to live his life and do his work.

II

PIONEERING

"We remember the fleshpots which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away."

PIONEERING, in any line of life, involves difficulty, distress, discouragement, and especially is this the experience of a pioneer missionary's early years. Nor is he generally dowered with buoyant hope above his fellows, though, happily for himself and his work, his call has shaken his soul to unwavering steadfastness, and enriched him with a calm trust, sufficient for triumph over obstacles that often, even to himself, seem insurmountable. The thought of the sublime faith and perseverance of that great man, Robert Morrison, and of those who followed him, is ever an inspiration to the successful, and a tonic to the depressed worker.

Robert Morrison was indeed the chosen of the Lord, the Apostle of China. Setting out a century ago, in 1806, he was, if it be possible, in even worse case than St Paul when he went forth to preach Christ to the Mediterranean world. Paul had with him Barnabas and Mark; he was well acquinted with the languages required, and generally found friends and hearers already versed in and attached to the Sacred Book which he expounded. Not so with Robert Morrison. To his lot it fell to come out alone, with never a fellow-worker to cheer, nor a Chinese believer to welcome him; with little knowledge of the language, no Word of God from which to preach, and perhaps, worst of all, with the knowledge that there were at least three hundred million people who wanted neither him nor his message, and yet to whom he was sent, single-handed. Hopeless task! Fatuous presumption! Impossible attempt!

'Do you think you can convert the Chinese?" "No, but God can."

The sublimity of his faith was only equalled by the patience with which he pursued his task. Knowing that he would never with mortal eye see the ingathering, none the less diligently did he plough and sow, in the sure and certain hope of somewhere, somehow, joining in the crowning song of harvest home. The sheaves already reaped in one brief century, unparalleled in the history of the Church, bear irresistible testimony to the wisdom of his faith, and the manifest intention of God towards this people. Let him who will still doubt, and let him who dares stand aside and refuse to share with God in carrying out His world-embracing plan.

The obstacles in pioneering are many. Like the man who goes out into the wilds and has forests to clear, roots to dig up, virgin land to plough and sow, his own cabin to build, and, worst of all, solitude to bear—so, in pioneer Mission work, there is enough to daunt the spirit and challenge the will. How, at times, the pioneer envies his fellow-student who has gone to a church and a work all ready-made for him!

His first duty is to get a roof over his head. There is a wide difference between Africa and China in this respect. In Africa he must build; in China, rent or buy; and the difficulty is about equal. In Africa he builds, and begs the people to come and settle near him. In China he rents, and wishes his neighbours would occasionally go and leave him in quietness. When the Rev. Thomas Wakefield—one of the most charming men I ever met—was first introduced to East Africa by Dr Krapff, the doctor, on landing, said to him and his colleagues, "Now, the first thing for a missionary to do is to look for wood and water." Excellent, thought Mr Wakefield; without wood how could they build a house; without water—what could any one do without water! "But," said Mr Wakefield a quarter of a century later, "we have found that something more than wood and water is wanted in order to a successful Mission. We want people." The missionary who comes to China has nothing to complain of in that respect. If he be a pioneer, his arrival is the signal for curious crowds to assemble, that would try the equanimity of the gentlest. Nor is it many years since the crowds themselves were anything

but gentle, and in numbers of places the pioneer soon made an exit more precipitate than dignified.

Here in Wenchow, when Mr George Stott and Mr J. A. Jackson made their entry in November 1867, they lodged for a time in a native inn. As long as they merely lodged they were not seriously interfered with, but they had no sooner rented a small house, with much difficulty, than an angry crowd broke in the gate, and only Mr Stott's courageous bearing prevented their being expelled. Ten years later, when Mr Exley opened our own Mission here, he was able to buy a good-sized house, which he altered for a dwelling, adding a small street chapel and a school-room alongside.

The missionary having at last found a shelter under "his own vine and fig tree," even though as yet he cannot say "none daring to make him afraid," his next duty is to learn the language. For the student of Chinese to-day there are many valuable aids, but it was not by any means always thus. Indeed, the books used by the present-day student have almost all been published during the last ten years.

Imagine, then, our youth set down in an out-of-the-way station, impatient to deliver his message, and—almost before he has ploughed and sown—to begin gathering the harvest which he has come to reap. He is surrounded by countless people—the city swarms with humanity. In the narrow streets busy pedestrians unceremoniously jostle each other as they energetically push along, earning their daily rice by the activity of their feet. Half-naked coolies stream with perspiration as they stagger under backbreaking burdens, or swing gracefully along under a lighter load. Chair-bearers pant breathlessly as they screech to the loiterer, "Chair, Chair." Women toddle towards some temple with their bundle of joss-sticks, "mincing as they go." Boys chatter and squabble on their way to school. "Hurry along, sorrow and song."

Myriads of them, and one white-faced, retiring, half-afraid young man! Their customs are different, their tastes are different. Their mental and moral equipment varies greatly from his. They cannot conceive why he is here—for no good purpose, that is certain. Come to teach them! This "corpse-

coloured" youth come to teach them, the heirs of Confucius and of all the sages! Ridiculous!

Fortunately the conceit is not limited to one side. The pale-faced lad, little aware of their ridicule, has also, despite his shyness, a pretty good conceit of himself and a better conceit of his message, for is it not the power of God unto salvation? Nor is his pride in his message ill placed; for, however much the Chinaman may hitherto have disliked change, he nevertheless does change, and, as time passes, both he and the youth lose something of their inherent self-conceit, and fill the empty corner with mutual respect and even esteem.

Eager, then, to deliver himself of his Message, the youth sets to work at the language, and in a month or two, whenever you meet him in his walks abroad, you find his pockets bulging with it in printed form, the work of more experienced men in other parts of China. Perhaps his efforts to accompany the presentation of the tract with a few broken sentences are a total failure. The recipient mistakes his carefully prepared words for "foreign talk," and crushes the youth with the simple phrase, "Pu tung," "Don't understand,"—a phrase *he* soon comes to understand only too well. Or the man, responding to the youth's too carefully enunciated Chinese, may say in his local dialect, "Fu tung fa 'o," "Don't understand foreign talk," literally, "barbarian words"! Possibly, despite the incomprehensibility of his "barbarian words," the tract is accepted, read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested, and a man is born into the image of the divine, a mere embryo it may be, but nevertheless, an embryo with new capabilities, amongst which is numbered the capacity to reproduce its species.

One beautiful day, more than twenty years ago, we were seated, my wife and I, at the foot of an ancient pagoda, which I now, a thousand feet above it, look down upon as I write. Out of the overflowing kindness of our hearts we were giving our teacher a half day's holiday—and taking one ourselves. Having hired a sampan, we soon found ourselves at the Twin Pagodas, picturesque emblems of China's superstition. As we sat there gazing on the lovely scene (for China is one of the loveliest countries on the face of the earth), a young farmer

came up with his hoe on his shoulder. There are not many places in this part of China, no matter how high the mountain or how broad the plain, where a foreigner can long sit without a native appearing on the scene. Our farmer stood stock still, and stared in basilisk Chinese fashion at the two foreigners. A few remarks were passed, the usual tract produced, and the man departed. Years passed, the incident had long been packed away in memory's lumber room, when one day a bright-faced man marched into my "study,"—a room given over much more to the study of Chinese human nature in its many phases than to the study of books.

"Don't you know me?" he asked, as he saw my inquiring glance.

"I fear I don't," was my reply.

"Do you remember one afternoon, many years ago, sitting by the pagoda across the river, and giving a tract to a young man there?"

"Now you recall the circumstance, I do."

"That young man was myself," he rejoined. "I took the tract home, read it, was deeply interested, and knowing there was a Christian living not far away, went to him for further information. He took me to service with him. I have now been a member several years, and have lately started Sunday services in my own village."

Thus, what a young missionary, in his early days, may not be able to do by means of the spoken language, he may succeed in doing by means of the written; for in China is found an elaborate system of writing, picturesque, terse, difficult to learn, somewhat rigid in form, but on the whole well adapted to the expression of thought. The missionary who is worth his salt learns all he can of both written and spoken language; for the possession of only the vernacular limits his usefulness, the Chinese scholar seeing in him a person of but mean education.

Our pioneer, then, is studying a hitherto unexplored language, or, as it is sometimes called, dialect, though the difference between it and any other is almost sufficiently great to constitute it a separate language. Let it be, say, the Wenchow vernacular. He finds himself seated with a Chinaman at his side, and with a copy of the New Testament

EAST SUBURB AND TWIN PAGODAS

in Chinese characters, a phrase-book in the Mandarin or northern form of the language, and a Chinese-English Dictionary before him. He cannot recognise a single character; when it is pronounced to him he wonders how to spell it; having spelt it in some fashion or other, his next difficulty is to find its meaning, and the one immediately following to re-pronounce it from his own spelling. Like a beginner at shorthand, he at first cannot read his own writing intelligibly. The best method of spelling, and that adopted by most linguists, is to use English consonants and Italian vowels, as far as they will go, and make up what may be lacking from his own genius —but he only discovers this later. When, after patient toil, he has classified his spelling and worked out a system, he discovers that Chinese lends itself quite readily to phonetic "romanisation."

It is not long after his commencement before he runs his head against the tones and gets hurt. They vary from five in the north to eight in the south of China. It is quite possible to talk, and make oneself generally understood, without a knowledge of the tones, for rhythm in Chinese, as in every language, is of even greater importance than strict syllabic accuracy. No man, however, can read Chinese characters aloud correctly, or in conversation lay stress on any particular word, unless he has a good knowledge of the tones. The ordinary Chinaman is quite unaware of their existence, and even amongst the literati only a small minority can accurately designate them, yet no native makes any mistake in actual usage.

We have tones in English, but they are arbitrary, and every man is a law to himself. Take, for instance, the word "What." There is the interrogatory what, the surprised what, the drawling what, the haughty what. In England, however, you may what your whats whatever way you will, and it is still a what, but in China a *ping* in one tone is quite a different word from a *ping* in another tone, as a well-known official is once said to have discovered. He was out with a party; the day was hot; so became the champagne. They were tiffining in a Chinese inn, and *ping* (ice) was demanded of the innkeeper. "How much?" asked mine host. "A trayful" was the reply. Imagine everybody's amusement when, after waiting

an unconscionable time, they saw brought in a trayful of hot native cakes, also called *ping*, but in a different tone.

Once upon a time I had an argument with a Christian plasterer whose conscience would not allow him to waste my money. The local whitewash possessed a yellowish tinge which did not please me, and, having a dim recollection of hearing that a little blue powder mixed with the whitening would whiten it, I said to the plasterer—

"Just go and buy a little *la*, and mix it with this whitewash."

"*La!* *la* wouldn't mix with whitewash."

"Oh yes, it would," said youthful confidence, "run off and buy some."

"It wouldn't be any good, and only waste your money."

"Never mind," I said, "I'll risk the waste, away you go."

"No," said the little man stubbornly, "it won't mix."

Becoming a trifle displeased, I looked up and wrote out the Chinese character, handed it to him, and said, "Now go at once and buy some of that."

"Oh!" said he, looking at the character, "you said *la*—wax. It's *la*—blue—you mean." Just the difference between a rising inflection and a sort of twirl in the voice.

Even during the writing of this chapter I have heard a lady, by a slight perversion of pronunciation, read from St John's Gospel, "I am the Vine, ye are the gimlets!" Nevertheless, despite tones and other peculiarities, Chinese is by no means the impossible language that some people think it. A person of ordinary linguistic capacity can learn to use it effectively, and he who has a gift for languages can learn to speak almost sufficiently well to pass for a native.

A certain missionary, one glorious starlight night returning from a service, had his eyes fixed on the galaxy of beauty above, and his mind so absorbed in their mysteries, that he turned too soon, and, instead of entering the approach to his own gate, ran full tilt against the closed door of a native shop. His latchkey, which he had been swinging between his finger and thumb, fell with a clatter as his body went with a thud against the door. Voices were heard within, and, not caring for his neighbours to see him in so undignified a position, he hastily groped for his key. As luck would have it, this had fallen down behind the

lift-up doorstep. It would never do to leave his key, and therewith his compound, at the mercy of an outsider, so he continued his search, but the noise he made fumbling for the missing article still further aroused the inmates. He summoned up courage to knock, on which a clamour arose within. Being well known to them, he announced his name and address, and begged them to show a light. "Open the door, indeed!" shouted shrill female voices, "lost your key, have you? a pretty story! Go away at once, or we'll rouse the neighbours! His entreaties only made the outcry greater, and the call, "Thieves! thieves!" was raised. What a position! Who will blame him for incontinently fleeing! Reaching home, he knocked up his servant, who brought a lamp, and, despite a renewed alarm, found the missing key, on which they departed to safety. The only comfort he gathered from this mishap was, that at last he had acquired the language well enough to be mistaken for a native—even for a native thief!

Our young missionary soon begins to find his Chinese characters by no means uninteresting study. Though at first they all seem alike, he soon discovers, not without a sigh, that they are of myriad-shaped variety. But as time goes on, he discovers a certain amount of system running throughout their mazes, and, being of a studious nature, soon learns from observation, as well as from reading, that originally they were ideographic, or pictures of the object represented. The limits of such a system were necessarily soon reached, and he finds that a phonetic element has been introduced into the formation of the characters. Heartily does he wish that the Chinese had adopted the Egyptian method, and taken a score or more of their principal signs to form an alphabet. It would have saved them the labour of forming tens of thousands of characters, and himself the difficulty of learning so many wearisome columns of them.

The words for sun and moon were originally and respectively. In course of time all characters have become square in shape, so sun is now 日 and moon 月. When the two are united, thus, 明, they mean clear, bright. Again

formerly represented a hill. It has since become 山, and whenever it combines with another character, shows that the new character thus formed has some connection with hills. Thus 岩, hill over rock, means a crag, or precipice. Again, 木 represents a tree, or wood, and when a character is met with, of which this sign forms a part, either the name of a tree, or some article made of wood is indicated; *e.g.*, 桐 represents the paint tree, while 板 means a board, and 材 means building materials. The latter half of each of these three is used as a separate character, but in combination with 木 it gives the sound to the new character thus formed, in other words becomes its phonetic. These are simple instances, and, of course, in so ancient and complex a language as Chinese, great modifications have occurred. Nevertheless, for working purposes, it may be taken as a rule that the characters consist of two parts, one indicating the meaning, called the Radical, the other indicating the sound, called the Phonetic.

Our student finds that in the Imperial Chinese Dictionary there are forty thousand of these signs. Despair seizes him, which is only partially mitigated on finding that nearly thirty thousand may be regarded as obsolete, and that of the remaining ten thousand, he may be well content with less than half. Four thousand is still a large figure, and very few Europeans are able to acquire even this reduced vocabulary. The majority are satisfied to have a nodding acquaintance with the less than two thousand found in the New Testament, and with these, only for reading, and not for writing purposes. Every student knows that it is vastly easier to construe Latin than to compose it; much more is this the case with the Chinese written language, from which the spoken differs in construction, in the words used, and especially in terseness.

Our student, however, is ambitious, and aims at the stars. May he have strength and patience to pursue his aerial flight. In the meantime, having formed his system of " romanisation,"

he can now read his own writing with increasing accuracy. He has, moreover, struggled through a chapter of St John's Gospel in character, and endeavours with the aid of his teacher to translate it into the spoken tongue; for if his lot be cast much south of the Yangtsz, the new Testament he uses is not in the everyday speech of his people. As he proceeds, he compiles a vocabulary of terms in common use. In this he is probably aided by considerable theatrical display on the part of his teacher, who may sit on a chair to indicate the meaning of the word sit, may even lie on the floor to indicate the recumbent position, possibly snore loudly to express the idea of sleep, and who, to all appearances, would stand on his head if he could, to explain the meaning of upside down.

When a few months, possibly a year, has passed, the pressure that St Paul experienced comes upon him, and "Woe is me," he feels, "if I preach not the Gospel." Already he has had numerous visitors, stammered a few words to them, and sent each away, literally with a tract up his sleeve. Happy for him if he has a native preacher, even though from another station, and perhaps speaking a different tongue. Already a few people have begun to meet on the Sabbath day, and unable to wait longer, he prepares his first sermon and delivers it. A missionary has recently described his first Chinese sermon as consisting of the following words, "This book, this here book, this book is good, this book is good book, this here book is a good book."

My own first attempt took place in June 1883, less than six months after landing in Wenchow. I had found my text, and happily discovered a sermon on it, in the Ningpo vernacular, by Archdeacon Moule of the Church Missionary Society. From this sermon, where I thought I understood it, I plagiarised freely, and after much labour succeeded in reducing my address to writing. It was delivered one evening to our little body of about thirty Christians with exhausting effort. The discourse ended, I asked them if they had understood, whereupon, with beaming smiles they all responded heartily, "Oh tung-djah ba," "We understood it all"—which was certainly more than I did myself!

After our missionary has once broken the ice, service follows service, and sermon sermon, often more to the increase of the

preacher's vocabulary than to the enlightenment of his audiences. Certain it is that for the first couple of years the missionary profits more from his discourses than do his people. Nevertheless, his hearers increase in number, and respectful attention is paid ; for the messenger brings a glorious Truth, and, though it shine through the thick clouds of his linguistic disability, it still shines : dim though his light may be, without him there would be less, and his clean life and manifest sincerity tell even more than his less lustrous words.

There are, of course, times when all things seem against him. His progress in the language appears painfully slow, for he makes himself understood with much difficulty. His sermons too are a laborious effort, most of the week being spent in gathering together what he profusely spends in less than half-an-hour, apparently to little profit. One missionary, formerly in this province, after two years' vain endeavour, actually packed his things off for Shanghai, and would soon have been *en voyage* for home had not a friend insisted on examining him. This gentleman discovered him to be the possessor of a copious vocabulary but deficient in ability to string it together. Persuaded to remain, he ultimately became a famous preacher, and a man of wide influence.

Probably, also, our pioneer has little opportunity for and less temptation to outdoor exercise. No comrade calls him, no open country invites, and, even if it did, he would be afraid to venture far, lest he lose his way. Occasionally he ventures out on a solitary walk, feeling at first exceeding brave at going out alone, noting each turn in the road with care, lest he miss his way back. As he strides homewards, the turnings have got twisted, and his heart beats faster as he fails to recognise his surroundings. The people stare at him, and their looks to his unaccustomed eye seem malign and forbidding. The very dogs are his foes, for do they not recognise him as a foreigner, and bark viciously at his heels, just as they do after the ragged beggars ? He grows hot and anxious, pursues his way with a boldness he by no means feels, and speedily, to his unbounded relief, runs right into his own gate, almost before he has really discovered his whereabouts. What a relief ! How nice his Chinese house looks after the forbidding streets ! What a pleasant reaction after his anxiety ! Yet all the time, as he

finds out with amusement later, he has not in all been half a mile from home.

Again, his servant, untrained and unsupervised, in endeavouring to cook his food foreign fashion, cooks it in fashion barbarian instead. Had not our young divine an unreasonable prejudice against native food, chiefly received from travellers' tales he heard and read on his way out, he would find his cook prepare meals in native style both tasty and wholesome. But no, he is afraid of eating dog or cat, hence he eats bread sour, or doughy, or mouldy instead. Oh ! for " the fleshpots of Egypt ; now our soul is dried away." Oh ! for " the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks," but not, oh, not " the garlic," for his servant breathes it o'er him as he serves his pudding, his teacher aspirates it upon him as he teaches him the full value of his h's, the people trail it like a cloud of glory behind them as they go, and through it he gasps his be-garlicked way as he wanders forth in search of fresh air. Not the garlic, please !

In time a gentle presence comes to share his lot, and soon she transforms his barn-like house, his kitchen, his cook, and, most of all, himself. Then, for the first time, he fully comprehends that phrase of Isaiah's about the wilderness blossoming as the rose ; and discovers, moreover, that he has been starving in the midst of plenty, that he has all the time been living in an Egypt filled with fleshpots, and cucumbers, and melons, and onions, in addition to the garlic galore, with which he was already too well acquainted.

What a change from those dark days that are now relegated to the limbo of the past ! Then, alone in the midst of myriads, he was ever looking forward with longing to the day when he might visit again some centre of civilisation, and hear once more, and clumsily join in the sweet music of his native tongue. On any such visit heaven seemed almost opened, with just an edging of haze to remind him of the day of return to exile. Yet, even then, he had in due course gone back, setting his lips firmly together that they might not show his weakness, to find his grey hours tinged with rosier memories of days of fellowship, and what was equally good, nay better, to find that what he had learned of the language was not forgotten, but had actually fallen into clearer perspective by his temporary withdrawal.

So go early pioneering days. He endures hardness as a good

soldier, and his spiritual chest and biceps grow bigger and stronger for the labours and disappointments that the succeeding years have in store for him. This is the stage that breaks him in, or breaks him, and the grit and staying power he then acquires become a capitalised reserve fund from which he may draw a dividend when the wicked world cuts his profits over fine. And some day, when his first furlough falls due, and he is called upon to part from the people to whom his heart has gone out, words will choke him as he sees the tears streaming down faces that have vexed and grown dear to him, and hears voices shaken with emotion, praying the Good Father to care for and soon bring him back. For years afterwards, he may often look with appreciation on the gifts they brought him, and rejoice that, as one of the scrolls they presented affirms, " combed by the winds and washed by the rains," he has been privileged to " widely preach the kingdom of heaven."

III

EVANGELISATION

"Let us go into the next towns; that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

MANY and various are the modes of evangelising China, and of no single form may it be said, "This is the one and only method." Just as at home one minister gives much time to visitation, another to his study and sermon preparation, a third to an "institutional church," and in each case a prosperous work results, so every missionary devotes himself in his own special way, and in general each man's method is best suited to his own particular temperament and the gifts with which God has endowed him.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," says our Lord in regard to the "prophets" of His day; nor is it a less valuable test for the "prophets" of our own, albeit quality as well as quantity is a desideratum in prophets as well as in their fruit. Numerical success is not always a testimony to the wisdom of the worker, neither is lack of numbers, especially in pioneer work, a proof of unwisdom either in the worker or his methods, for soils vary. Nevertheless experience, now a centenarian, cries aloud to every missionary: Examine yourself and your ways in the light I shed. All methods of evangelisation used by the Church in China are good, though some are more effective than others. Happy is the man who has wisdom, strength, and means to employ them all, either in person, or, better still, in his native staff, for to know how to use men is of more value to a missionary than much book learning.

The street chapel has been, and in many stations still is much used for purposes of evangelisation. Opinions differ as to its permanent value. I once heard an experienced

missionary, who had given a portion of each day to street chapel preaching for nearly twenty years, say that he had come to the conclusion that his time had been mis-spent and his breath wasted. His church was prosperous, but this he attributed to other causes. He had, however, forgotten that his earlier converts and workers were first introduced to Christian truth through this very instrumentality. More accurately might he have said, that his time could now be put to better use; for, that which may be helpful in the early stages of a mission may well become of only secondary value after the church has grown.

Another well-known missionary once related how his sixteen years of street chapel preaching had only resulted in a church of sixteen members. It seemed a poor return for so many years of such exhausting labour, but, during those sixteen years, this missionary's name and character thereby became distinguished throughout a large county, and he and those who have been sent to work with him have since reaped a more gracious reward.

In Wenchow, our street chapel was much used during the early days of our work, but other and wider claims, and lack of suitable men, have caused it to be transformed into a book shop and Bible depot. Now it is doing perhaps more good in circulating Bibles, hymn-books, and other works of a Christian and educational character than it did when used as a "school of Tyrannus." Its office of preaching hall is now filled much more effectively by evening services, which are held in different parts of the city nearly every night of the week,

Perhaps, however, my reader would like to visit a street preaching room. It shall be the first to which I myself was introduced. The street is a narrow cleft between the shops which line both its sides; along it a steady stream of people moves from dawn till dark, and even after. The room is a hired one, formerly a shop; alterations have been made, and benches and a table put in.

Allow me first to introduce you to the native pastor, Mr, Wong, who would be Mr "King" in England. By the way, there are more Wongs in China than Smiths in all the world.

"What is your lofty name?" asks Mr Wong.

" My unworthy name is Reader," you answer.

" What is your honourable country ? " he again asks.

" My unworthy country is ' the Great Brave ' " (which means England), you reply, with patriotic hesitation round about the word " unworthy," especially as your tender conscience abhors polite fibs.

" And what may be your honourable age ? " calmly continues he, meaning no offence, but making up his mind, after a glance at your auburn hair that you must at least be sixty.

" Tell him to mind his own business," says the look on your face, and—Mr Wong is astonished to hear that you are only thirty.

You do not admire our room ? Neither do we. It is close, dark, stuffy. Will it comfort you to learn that it will be closer, darker, and stuffier before you leave it, for we are hoping for a full house, considerable native tobacco, and a human atmosphere—at least we are hoping for the full house. Try to forget the discomforts by examining the scrolls on the walls, or, still better, the interested faces of the people. First, however, let us remember our errand. Shall the light-bearer attempt to reveal the face of his Lord with an ill-trimmed lamp ? Let us kneel, and Mr Wong will help us trim the lamp.

Now the door is open, and unlike what you have been accustomed to, the congregation waiting for the parson —let the parson await his congregation. Past like a living stream flow the people, intent on the business of the hour. Let no one think they want *our* wares. They need them badly enough, and their needs stretch out longing arms towards us ; we feel them tugging at our heart-strings as we sit here waiting, but let no one fancy that the individual Chinaman is crying out, " Come over and help us." Yet the cry of his race is as real as was the cry of the Macedonian race two thousand years ago, for the man who appeared to St Paul had neither personality nor name, save " the man of Macedonia." It was the type he embodied and the need he voiced. In similar fashion the " man of Cathay " appears before us in these crowds of people hastening like phantoms past our door, and his needs cry for what he himself desires not, and would prefer to do without.

At last he advances a step nearer, and comes sauntering hesitatingly in, no longer impersonal, but in the flesh and with a name and surname. Mr Wong is asking him to sit down, and after considerable bowing and ceremony he submits. Apparently he is a man of intelligence, for here comes Wong for a book from the table. Let us notice from which pile he takes it, for these books are of various kinds, some so simple that we hope the ignorant will understand them if they can find even a schoolboy to read them out. Evidently this visitor is also a " Reader," for Wong is offering him one of our more classical tracts.

Other visitors are now straggling in; please sit still and I will stand up and try to interest them. A foreigner on his feet, talking, is a sufficient attraction to many; and, as everything in China is open which, according to our ideas, ought to be closed, and everything closed which should be open, the people, observing others seated inside, come in to see what is going on. Soon the seats, the aisle, and the back are filled with listeners. We are telling them, maybe, that man consists of two parts, the mortal and the immortal; that, while the mortal may seem of paramount importance to the busy man, we venture to ask him to pause for a few minutes, to " steal a moment's leisure from his haste," and consider with us the importance of the immortal nature, its origin and destination.

Mr Reader, you do not understand the sermon; that is your loss, and we are now too tired after its delivery to re-state it, which is perhaps your gain! Moreover, this kind of sermon cannot be re-told; to be effective it must be hot from the forge. Suffice it, that He who made the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, He who for man's sins sent His beloved Son to the Cross, He who *seeks* man's salvation, has been held up before the people. They, too, have been held, as you have seen, by the speaker's message, and have expressed their approbation as they turned to depart. What will be the result? That lies between the man and God. The seed sown to-day may spring to-morrow or twenty years hence. It does so in China as elsewhere.

To indulge in iconoclasm is no difficult matter to the evangelist. Idolatry is so manifestly foolish that he may pour out as much sarcasm as he likes, for his hearers will

laugh heartily, agree with him in all he says, and—some of them kneel in front of an idol before the day is out. There is, however, much more pleasure and profit to be obtained from building up the glorious truths of Christian teaching than in destroying the superstitions in which the people have found a measure of comfort for so many generations. The evangelist has the privilege of showing them "a more excellent way," and this can be made plain without pouring ridicule on the poor old mud path, which was yet a path of righteousness, even though most were content with merely bowing to it, and leaving it but little trodden. When Mr Stott was once advising a Wenchow preacher to preach Christ in preference to ridiculing idolatry, he received a beautiful reply: "You mean like this: the people are now living in an old tumble-down hut, and you don't want me to pull this down about their ears. I am, as it were, to build a beautiful house, furnished with all good things, and then invite them to leave their old broken-down hut and enter into their new possession." [1]

China was not always an idolatrous country; indeed, idolatry dates its introduction from India since the commencement of the Christian era. Yet to-day there are probably as many idols in China as people. The image, in almost every case, represents a dead person, for the worship of the Chinese, generally speaking, may fitly be described as a worship of the dead. Before the idol the Chinaman bows low with his offering of incense and candles, or his feast of many dishes, dishes which, being a thrifty man, he afterwards takes home to enjoy with his family or friends.

There is little difficulty in pointing out the folly of all this and of much even more objectionable superstition. It is easy to show that the idol has ears, but they are of clay—how can it hear! has hands, also of clay—how can it stretch out arms to save! has feet of clay—how can it come to help him! has a mouth and a throat, full of clay—how can it possibly speak! has eyes, also of clay—which everybody admits to be blind, until the priest, at its dedication, paints in its pupils with a mixture of ink and pig's blood—and how can ink and pig's blood give sight!

[1] "Twenty-six Years in China," by Mrs Stott.

To some these facts need pointing out, but there is constructive material enough at hand of more value to the evangelist than these merely destructive agencies. For God has not left Himself without witness in this land. There are well-known Chinese phrases, as well as noble sayings of the great Chinese philosophers, Confucius, Laotsz, Mencius, which have prepared his way, and by the use of which he can convict his audiences of sin, of righteousness, of judgment to come, and even of the possibility of salvation.

He may show from these sources that " The soul of man is bestowed by Heaven," and not by idols, or the beings the idols represent ; that " Man depends on Heaven for his rice," and not on the worship of images, or on charm-flags stuck in his fields ; that man's conscience, which enables him to judge between right and wrong, is the " Good heart of Heaven's law," and not the gift of an idol ; that " It is Heaven that gives peace and happiness," and not those beings to whom they pray for such blessings ; that the best thing which can be said of a man when he is dead is, that he has " returned (or, gone home) to Heaven " ; that as a New Year's greeting, to wish that a friend throughout the year might " lean on (trust) Heaven " would be complimentary, and meet with thanks, while to wish that he might " lean on the gods " would imply sickness, and be an offence. And as " Heaven " represents the One who dwells there, who has created and upholds and loves all men, it is to Him that prayer should be made, thanks expressed, and in whom alone salvation can be effectually sought, as well for this life as for that which is to come.

He (God) requires no offerings of candles, for has He not made the sun, the moon, and the stars to light man's way both by day and by night ! He asks no incense, save the incense of pure lips and a clean heart, for has He not created the myriad of sweet-smelling flowers for *man's* delectation ! He needs no offerings of flesh, for " the cattle upon a thousand hills are Mine," saith the Lord. And, when man, even those wisest of men, the sages, by searching could not find out God, He at last sent His only Son, that once for all, through His death on the Cross, the world might be rid of offerings of blood, might know God's love, and learn that He demanded

far greater sacrifices of men than sacrifices of dead animals. For the demands of God are living sacrifices, human sacrifices, the bodies, souls, and spirits of men, that they should repent of sin and uncleanness, and give their hands to serve Him, their feet to walk His ways, their lips to speak His Truth, their hearts to love and adore Him; and no offerings of incense, candles, pigs, or goats can take the place of these greater oblations, or be acceptable in His sight. Such are the Eternal Truths that find ready garb in the Chinese language, and that appeal with amazing facility to the Chinese heart and conscience.

Fifteen years ago, the evangelist hereabouts still met with more than enough of controversy—sometimes even in the midst of his addresses. Such questions as, "What about ancestral worship?" or, "Do your Christians throw their ancestral shrines into the cesspool?" would be asked; or, "If everybody went to heaven, wouldn't it soon be full?" "Do foreigners really take out our people's hearts and livers?" "Why do the Christians gouge out the idols' eyes?" "Are not you foreigners scheming to get hold of our country?" and so on. To-day he rejoices more often at hearing some amongst his hearers say, at the close of his address, "It is all true, all true;—but I can't live up to it! Great is his joy that this feeling, "It is high, I cannot attain unto it," has been aroused, for may it not indicate the birth-pangs of a soul, the beginning of the struggle into the divine life? "I know you cannot live up to it, brother, that is why Christ came to earth, and also why I have been sent to your honourable country, for there is help and strength to be had for the asking from the Source of Strength. Come with us and we will do you good, by teaching you to ask and obtain what you need, from God Himself."

The best evangelists are of course the native Christians, who by their life and conduct daily witness to the power of God in their changed characters, and who are ever ready to give a reason for the truth that is within them. The other day I asked a good Christian man—

"How did you become a believer?"

"Well," he said, "I was outside the West Gate one day, mending Mrs Ching's tubs, and as I worked she began to tell

me about the doctrine. I listened as I worked, was deeply interested, and for a long time afterwards kept pondering over the matter, but having nobody to introduce me to a service I did not know how to get in."

"Why did you not come without introduction?" I asked; "the door is wide open to all."

"I know that now," he rejoined, "but I did not know it then. One day I went to a man of my acquaintance who kept a grain shop, and who was attending the services, and asked him to take me with him. What do you think the man said? He actually advised me not to go, saying that he himself was thinking of withdrawing, as he could not afford the loss of time, one day in seven; and if *he* could not afford, he wanted to know how I with my large family could."

"Who is this man?" I asked.

"Oh! he is still coming, but he is not a member," said he; and continued, "After that I again put off the matter, until one Sunday, on passing the Zing-see Church, I saw the gate open and ventured in. You were preaching, and, amongst other things, said that no man who sincerely prayed to God for light day by day, for a month, would fail to receive help. So I went home and prayed, and found what you said to be true. From that day I began to pray and to attend the services regularly."

In the daily testimony of our native Christians we have our most effective evangelising force. As the Chinese put it, "one man influences ten, ten a hundred, a hundred a thousand," and so on—we sometimes wish they did. Nevertheless, our Christians tell their friends, relatives, and neighbours, and, like the sweet potato-vine, fresh roots are constantly striking.

Another form of evangelisation, and a most valuable one, is that of village preaching. Certainly, to the missionary it is by far the most trying and arduous, but the results are fully commensurate with the discomforts.

Our missionary has now begun to feel some measure of liberty in preaching to his ordinary city congregation, and desires like his Master to "go into the next towns" and villages also, in order to evangelise "the regions beyond." Well is it for him if he has the company of a good native

helper ; otherwise, he will soon be lost in more senses than one, for the road to a Chinaman's heart is as difficult as the roads his feet have to tread. These roads are mere tracks, generally paved with rough stones and—intervals. The branch roads are many, and, to the novice, all alike, just as the Chinese, both in face and dress, seem all alike to the new arrival, until he advances from generalities to detail. It shocks our personal vanity to find that the Chinaman often has the same view of our noble selves, and that he cannot immediately distinguish between Mr Koarse and Mr Fyne ; as also it wounds our national vanity to hear our beautiful print and orthography described as the track of a fly's legs after a tumble into the ink.

My own first evangelistic trip was not a success. A borrowed preacher, whose right side was paralysed from birth ; an earnest Christian, anxious to " roll the old Chariot along " by carrying my bedding and basket, but who soon found them too heavy for his unaccustomed shoulder ; and myself, callow and unfledged, we set out, a hopeful trio, to convert China ! Our boat landed us about three miles from the city, on the opposite bank of the river, and we walked in towards a good-sized village.

The progress would have charmed a snail—the preacher with his peculiar gait, and the man with the unaccustomed shoulder. The road was nearly a mile long, but we did not give it up. No ! there were giants to slay, and we were going to slay, or be slain by them—the preacher with his lame leg, the man with his sore shoulder, and myself with an English throat, and a few imperfect Chinese phrases rattling irresponsibly about inside it. We arrived. So did the " giants," in the shape of a number of unkempt women and children, and one or two decrepit old men, too worn-out to be in the fields. We did not run away in terror, but boldly stood our ground. I propped up the lame preacher, and he turned on his stream of eloquence. He had " liberty," as our Methodist forefathers styled it, and the " giants " were awed into silence. When the lame preacher had finished, my turn came. Fortunately not much more was required, for he seemed to have absorbed more than his share of " liberty "—at any rate there was little enough left.

The " giants " became friendly ; they even offered us tea and refreshments. It was then I discovered they were not what they seemed. Indeed, some of them were already connected with the China Inland Mission here. To meet with these people was pleasant enough, but having resolved to build on no other man's foundation, I soon set out with my comical companions for the boat, and told the boatman to row us up the north river to a large village some miles away, where, being out of sight of the city, we seemed to be as far from Wenchow as Wenchow is from England. As a matter of fact we had not travelled much more than ten miles, but it distinctly felt like the interior of China.

In the morning the other man's " foundations " again appeared close alongside, so the lame preacher was urged to find out some place where we might have the unmitigated joy of hailing no man as friend. Having hired a chair and two bearers for the preacher, away we went into a charming valley amongst the mountains, to a village of 4000 inhabitants. There we preached in the open air to a goodly number of people, afterwards wandering about the neighbourhood delivering leaflets. For tiffin, being still young, we bought some Chinese cakes, and, after more preaching and talking, walked the pleasant journey back through the fields to the boat.

Tired, but thankful for our favourable reception, we reached the boat, when, lo and behold ! here were two more Christians. It really seemed as if all China had been converted before its time. Inviting the two young men to enter, we spent an hour with them in reading the New Testament and in prayer, and next morning turned the nose of our mat-covered old boat homewards, having decided to find where the " other man's foundations " lay before making a second tour.

On next meeting Mr Stott we had a good time together over the matter. It turned out there were not a dozen Christians along the banks of the north river, up which I had been travelling, a river stretching nearly a hundred miles inland, along whose course lay hundreds of villages, amongst which, to the north and west, we now, after many years, have more than forty churches. The large village wherein no Christian hailed us as friend was, when this chapter was first written,

still in the condition in which we left it. A few months ago the way opened for us to establish an out-station there, and it now has a name on our plan, and a regular Sunday service.

Perhaps my reader would like to take a trip up country, and learn for himself the meaning of village evangelisation. Let it then be autumn. The air is dry and bracing, the exhausting heat of summer is over, and our pale cheeks will be none the worse for the fresher country breezes. We will haul out our provision basket, and pack it with things for a week's journey. What shall we put in ? Why, everything we are likely to need, to be sure. This is a sort of picnic in which you, who have no responsibility, and to whom all is new, will no doubt find considerable enjoyment ; but please remember that it is possible to get a distaste for picnics and picnic food.

In go these chickens, tasteless creatures ! They have had to scratch so hard for a living that their legs are all tendons, and as to a chest, they have had no spare time or food for developing one. In go bread, potatoes, coffee, tea, everything save rice, and even that we must take if we want it white and fine, instead of coarse and red, such as the poorer natives use. Now for the bedding : a thick wadded quilt, blanket, pillow, etc., etc., all to be wrapped up in a piece of canvas, and again in a close-woven coir mat.

The tide will not wait, so out we go through the odoriferous streets, and—here is the city gate, on the point of closing for the night, and here the river, with the boat ready to start. We have a clear night, for which let us be thankful, as the river, being about three-quarters of a mile wide at this point, can be cause for anxiety in dark and squally weather. Mr Stobie's boat was swamped just down there a couple of years ago, and for an hour in stormy winter weather he and his men stood immersed to the waist in their waterlogged bark, which was invisible beneath their feet until they drifted ashore. The coolie will spread our beds under the cover, while we sit outside to enjoy the glory of the night. The beds being spread, we turn in ; and soon even you, despite your feeling of strangeness, are fast asleep, leaving yourself entirely at the mercy of this, to you, suspicious-looking

boatman and his crew of two, who, nevertheless, will deal with you as faithfully as men usually deal with each other.

Indeed, he has already done so, for lo! the night is over and gone, morning has dawned bright and sunny, and we are anchored in clear water, close to the bank, amidst scenery as bonnie as Scottish—mountains on every side, and a lovely deep basin inviting us to a morning dip. There are, it is true, villages and villagers within sight, but really people must take the consequences if they look this way. After all, they wear so little themselves in summer that we shall not startle them much except by the whiteness of our skins—"white as death," they will say. Have you ever heard of the Chinese boy in a Mission school who was being examined concerning the different races of the earth and their colour?

"What colour is the negro, my boy?" asked the examiner.

"Black, sir."

"Good: and what colour is the American Indian?"

"Copper colour, sir."

"Right: and what colour is an Englishman?"

"White, sir."

"And now what is the colour of a Chinaman, my boy?"

"MAN colour, sir," proudly answered the youth. Nevertheless the Chinaman admires a pink and white skin, almost as much as the negro does; and the women in the city do their best to copy it with rouge and powder.

Our next business is chairs and chair-bearers, for while *you* may be able to walk twenty miles on a roadless road, you have not to preach afterwards. Moreover, you are fresh from the best climate in the world for an Englishman, and have not had your blood impoverished by an enervating latitude, nor have you been down with ague and other worse complaints. Therefore, in the absence of your motor-car or the tram, you are welcome to walk if you like, though, mind you, we don't recommend it, for you will soon be drenched with perspiration. There is no bathroom at the far end, or any privacy for changing your clothes, and to sit in them, wet and tired, is to court a fever.

Neither do these coolies recommend it, for they are longing to earn a bowl of rice by carrying you—despite your weight

ON THE ROAD

—and will certainly consider you a mean man if, out of pity for them which they do not appreciate, you rob both them and their families of a day's food. So put yourself on that narrow board, rest your feet on this piece of wood that hangs down, lean your back against the back-rest, place your elbows on the long chair-poles, have no qualms over the deepest gulf, the sharpest turn, or the narrowest bridge, and endure stoically whatever may come.

When the bearers are of equal height, and, like a horse, keep out of step, then the motion is pleasant; but when they keep *in* step, as an elephant does with himself, then your feelings may be hurt. Good bearers travel twenty-five miles a day, day after day, and the pay is something less than a shilling per diem, all inclusive.

It is a lovely country we are passing through. Presently we shall emerge from this wood and reach the river again, just above a rapid. Here it is, and on our right towers, sheer from the water, a lofty cliff with a great rent in its face, inside which is built a picturesque temple. That some Chinese have a proper appreciation of natural scenery the sites they choose for temples and rest-houses give abundant evidence, but such appreciation does not seem to be so universally diffused as in England. For instance, the other day, speaking with a Chinaman of average intelligence, I asked him if he did not think the mountain scenery we had recently passed through very beautiful. "Mountains! Beautiful!" he uttered in surprise. "What is there beautiful about mountains!" Had I proceeded with, "Why, what a splendid lot of grass and brushwood for the oven there is on them," then would he have seen their beauty and become almost enthusiastic.

Let us get down from our chairs and climb up to the rift in the cliff while the coolies are getting the ferry-boat across to this side, for whenever did you reach a ferry and find the boat on the right side! Up the steep stone steps we go, two or three hundred of them, until we reach the cleft. Turning around the rock wall we come to the keeper's room. He is a tall old man, nearly blind, and though he be the keeper of a heathen temple, if you ask him he will tell you that he has no belief in the idols, that some of his relatives are Christians,

that Christianity is true and idolatry false, but—what else is he, a half-blind old man, to do for his living ?

He soon provides the usual cup of colourless tea, made in the cup, with a pinch of fresh leaves in the bottom—there is nothing so refreshing on a hot day—and he will welcome with rapture the ten cents you give him, and sing your praises for many a long day. We turn a corner, and find ourselves in a temple built upon the rocky platform, where neither floods, nor rains, nor winds can cause it to fall, for it is high above the waters, its floor is rock, its roof is rock, and its walls are rock. Yet the day is coming when a flood that nothing can resist will sweep out these idols, which sit here so sadly unkempt and forlorn. They remind one of the thirteen-year-old boy who was brought by his mother to a Wenchow missionary with a skin rupture.

" Take this piece of soap," said the missionary, " get some warm water, and wash him all over."

" Wash my boy all over ! " replied the indignant mother, " wash my boy all over ! He has never been washed all over since he was born." And the missionary believed her.

So, in regard to these idols, as in most other country temples, they prove by their appearance that they have neither been washed nor dusted " since they were born " ; the cobwebs are about them ; the squirrels, not so easily deceived as man, have run off with their hair, moustaches, and eyebrows for their nests ; the weather has worn off the paint, and truth, naked and unadorned, stands stark before us. A leak in the rock roof has dripped on the shoulder of one of these protectors of the people, its clay has collapsed, and a leprous arm lies shattered on the floor. Yet the Chinese come, even many miles, to worship this thing, bowing down in the dust before its decaying carcase.

Turn we from a scene so sordid for a look outside. Is it not splendid ? The river rippling its rapid race down to the waiting tide, the mat-sail boats creeping slowly up against the resisting current, the mountains and valley stretching sunnily in front, the white sands glistening with silvery brilliance on the opposing bank, woods ablaze with autumn splendour, rocks above and around—such a contrast to the squalor behind us, typical of the dawning glory we have the high

honour of heralding to this fair land, which until this late age has been left close-shrouded in the foul fog of dark and destructive delusion. The idols of China are already very much given over to " the moles and the bats," not so much through the power of Christianity as through the inertia and degeneracy inherent in idolatry itself.

The journey which in England would be done on a bicycle for exercise after a day's work, takes us nearly all day. Tiffin makes a pleasant break, and we enjoy our lunch under a tree or in some rocky cavity, out of the reach of old Sol's insistent rays, your company being preferable to his, and adding a flavour to the chicken it does not usually possess. Evening draws in, and our destination approaches. It is a large, walled village of 4000 inhabitants, who bear anything but a good name, for they are always spoiling for a fight. Let us greet their moroseness and half-spoken jeers with a kindly smile, for a smile has disarmed many a foe in China, as elsewhere.

The house we enter is, as you see, anything but attractive. Twenty years ago this clan and a neighbouring one still more powerful had a quarrel over the ownership of a hillside, and much fighting resulted, for both clans armed their men with guns, and a state of war was declared. Prisoners were taken on either side, not so much from the ranks of the warriors as from among the innocent, many of whom, though non-resident in the ancestral village, had the misfortune to bear the same clan surname. The cruelties suffered by these prisoners were sometimes very great, and their capture nearly always meant financial ruin by the time their redemption had been brought about. Deaths and wounds were a common occurrence, until, at last, the stronger clan brought the fight to a climax by a night attack, in which they succeeded in burning down the village we are now visiting. This it is which accounts for the poor quality and unfinished appearance of most of the houses, for when people are roofless they do not stickle long for quality, even if they have means to pay for it.

The killing of a few of their clansmen might have been borne, for they had reasonable hope of killing as many in return, but to have their homes destroyed wholesale was more than flesh and blood could endure. They must no longer

spare the adversary, but must go vigorously to law! So, the only literary man in the clan—the other clan had a score or two—a man who, though he is an opium smoker, has shown us much kindness, promptly removed the venue from the local mandarins to the provincial capital of Hangchow, fought the combined forces of the other clan before the provincial judge, and won the day. A great bitterness was, naturally, left behind, intermarriage between the two clans of course became impossible, and mutual hatred found frequent opportunity for expression. Lapse of time and the advent of Christianity have already produced a sensible change in this state of feeling, for our Christians refuse to hate each other; intermarriage is again becoming possible, and, though the nature of these hillmen is marred and barbarised by their frequent clan fights, with all the accompanying bloodshed and cruelty, Christianity is beginning to make its influence felt, and will in time do for this district what an effete Government never attempts.

There is but a poor room to offer you; the smoke of the kitchen stove, as you see, somewhat uncomfortably fills it; but, when your eyes smart beyond endurance, you can always find temporary relief by putting your head out of the window, an operation rendered easier of performance by the absence of glass and the difficulty of shutting it. Where are we to sleep, do you ask? That is simple enough. Here are four short benches, and there some loose boards; pick out the soft ones for yourself, and let me have the others. When you have travelled about a bit you will, like the convict, discover that some planks are softer than others, that there really is a soft side to a plank, though that side, somehow, seldom seems to be the one on which you happen to be lying. Be thankful, however, for the boards, hard or soft; they are better than an unyielding door, taken from its sockets. Be especially thankful you are not compelled to sleep in the family bed!

Yes, the place is somewhat draughty in winter; the walls, as you see, do not reach the rafters, nor the rafters the tiles, nor the tiles each other; the spirit of the hillmen is upon them, and "Keep your distance" is the order of the day, even in house-building. But is it well to strain your eyes looking at what is not there! Be thankful there is not less. Soon after

we first established ourselves in this village, the roughs, set on by the "gentry," decided we should have nothing at all, so they promptly smashed up our tables, benches, lamps, and some of our people at the same time. However, you may look forward hopefully to to-morrow, for then we shall be at the rival village, where we now have a decent set of rooms and a nice new chapel seating over two hundred.

I have brought you here that you may form for yourself an idea of what an itinerant ministry really is, see for yourself what results from it, and that I may tell you on the very spot how I first came to evangelise this extensive district.

It was fifteen years ago. I was on a visit to a station twenty miles to the westward, where a young tailor, a native of this village, had first heard the gospel. He told a number of his friends at home about it, and some of them walked the twenty miles, not once but several times, to hear more of it. Urgent messages were sent to me that I would pay them a visit, but strong objections were raised by some of the older Christians, for, said they, it is like going into a tiger's lair, and it is quite uncertain whether you will come back alive. Yet, here were a number of people calling for our help, and the greater the need the greater the responsibility; so we, myself and a native preacher, set off.

The journey over the mountains was glorious, and as I stood on Pisgah's mount, fifteen hundred feet or more above our Promised Land, and viewed the wide valley which lay at our feet, my heart went out towards the sturdy race that dwelt, and farmed, and fought amidst these lovely scenes, and I prayed that spoils might be won for God amongst them.

It was not without anxiety that we began our descent of the pass; first of all the road was rugged; so too were the people we met—very rugged; but, while we were still a couple of miles from our destination, half a dozen "inquirers" met and welcomed us. Of those who met on that occasion scarcely any are left. The preacher, Mr Wang, caught typhoid fever a few years afterwards and died; dear "Summer," who became the ablest preacher and worker in our Mission, and who died of cholera three years ago while visiting the coast stations, was then but a young local preacher; the tailor, who afterwards became a useful pastor, was taken ill during the

Boxer troubles of 1900, and died while a mob surrounded his door, threatening to drag him out for execution; the others, most of them, found the road to heaven o'er long. Yet, despite death and defection, the work has prospered.

A crowd of youths and children followed us in through the village gate, and a more objectionable set of young people than those of Nga-diu (Cragg Head) may you never be required to face. A Chinese dinner had been provided by a well-to-do man at whose house we were to stay, and in whose ancestral hall the preaching was to take place. Tired and hungry, we did what justice we could to his feast of very " fat things," amidst " confusion worse confounded."

The meal over, we all went across the narrow lane to the hall, which belonged to this man and his brother. It was a fine large building, and for several years afterwards our services were held therein. When finally driven to give it up we were indeed sorry, but neither the man nor his wife could be called " fruits of the Spirit." For some years they were refused baptism, and ultimately their conduct became so much at variance with the gospel that we felt a hovel, with truth and righteousness in it, were far better than this stately hall with such a man for landlord. On our leaving his hall he soon ceased attending service, forcibly robbed his deceased brother's wife of her possessions, hired men to carry her off at dead of night, sold her away in " marriage " far amongst the mountains, and joined the Roman Church to obtain protection from the consequences of his ill-deeds. That, then, is the reason why we are in this poor, broken-down house. Some day we hope to have money enough to build a chapel, for in this village and neighbourhood the Lord has already reclaimed much people, as you will observe to-morrow when they unite for Communion.

This, however, is a long aside. Our evening meal on my first visit is over, and we have reached the hall for our first proclamation of the Truth of God in this district of Nanchee, or Cedar Stream. The hall is already packed—such a crowd, crush, and clamour! We have lighted a lamp and some candles, all brought with us from the city, but they throw more light on the speakers than on the crowd. Some ugly faces are visible, and we are told, in a loud whisper, that there

are several bandits amongst the crush. Mr Wang, the native preacher, climbs to a chair, and while our hearts are going up quietly to God, commences to address the mob. For a quarter of an hour he perseveres faithfully, nobody hearing him, except a few in the very front; a political meeting packed by the opposition is a young ladies' school in comparison.

At last, having asked Mr Wang to sit down, we face the congregation in person. It is long before quiet reigns, but in time all grows silent as an empty church, and help comes from on high to tell this people of the Great Father and His goodness; their ignorance is condoned, their sins are not spared; we preach of God, of righteousness, of a judgment to come, of salvation and the life eternal. The people, no longer a noisy mob, listen for an hour without sign of weariness, though they have been busy in the fields all day. Finally, we sit down, and immediately one of the roughest young men in the village, a banditti lieutenant, stands out and says aloud, "He's spoken well, he's spoken well: if anybody has anything to say against him he's got to talk to me also." Not once, but twice, and again the third time the word has to be preached before we may retire to our room, where another company meets for more talk, until, somewhere in the small hours, we are allowed to take the rest our bodies crave.

Here is a sequel to this first attack on Nanchee. It is one of the great Sundays of our year, something like "Assembly Sunday" at home. The Annual District Meetings have just been held. Representatives are here in the city from all the Circuits. The morning sermon has been preached, but it has been decided to turn the afternoon service into an experience meeting. No lack is there of speakers, though it is the first meeting of the kind we have ever held. They do not even "in honour prefer one another," for three at a time are on their feet, each begging the other, "Permit me first," lest he should lose this unique opportunity of testifying what great things the Lord has done for him. Here stands one who has twice been beaten nearly to death for being a Christian. We have seen his poor body one black weal from head to foot, and almost despaired of his recovery. What does he wish to say?

We know his devotion and godliness, but have never heard the story of his conversion. What is he saying ?

"It was when Mr Soo paid his visit first to Nga-diu that I was converted. I was a violent and sinful man before that day. When he arrived in our village I was out in the fields. On reaching home I was told that a foreigner had arrived, and was going to preach his foreign doctrine in So-and-So's ancestral hall that evening. I hastily swallowed my evening meal, and set out in indignation, determined to find an opportunity of upsetting the meeting and stopping his talk. On reaching the hall I found it packed to the very curbstone at the back, but I got a footing, and bided my time for attack. That time never came. As he preached I became so enthralled with the truths he spoke, that I unconsciously edged my way forward, and, before the finish, was surprised to find that I had worked my way close up to the front. When he sat down I longed for him to start afresh and tell it all over again from the beginning. On leaving, I did not know what had come to me ; one thing I knew—that I was a different being, for the things that were easy for me before were now impossible. I now know well enough what had happened, for I was saved that night." And a stout pillar of the Church is Ka-Kung to-day.

In many and varied ways does the evangelist ply his vocation. On the street or in heathen temple, in church and house, on the road and on the water, from the player's theatrical stage, the preacher's pulpit, the narrow and risky platform of a rickety native bench, and from the veritable rostrum of a boat ; in fair weather and foul, among the well-disposed and the hostile, he does what his Master lends him strength and skill to de, thankful that "*some* seed falls into good ground." Native colporteurs, Bible-women, hospital preachers, and holders of "cottage services" all share in the great work. How easy it would be to write on and on under this heading of Evangelisation ! These few things are told to show that the Gospel "is the power of God to salvation to everyone that believeth," whether he be Jew, Gentile, or Chinaman.

IV

CHURCH ORGANISATION

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting."

WHEN our missionary has passed through the initial stage and set out evangelising, the next work to demand his attention will be the founding and organisation of churches throughout the district in his charge. How is he to cover his huge field with churches, and on what basis will he form them ? Up to the present his parish, and, for that matter, his mind also, is as bare as the palm of his hand, so far as definite plans are concerned. What is he to do ? How is he to begin ? What an utterly hopeless task it seems ! No wonder his unsympathetic fellow-countryman, who knows nothing of the heart-sickness which makes him faint, nor of the courage which refuses to let him play the coward, calls him fool or hypocrite, but St Paul, and others who have levered up the world, have suffered a like obloquy. So the same Power which urged St Paul, urges him also to look around for suitable openings.

Being gifted with a measure of organising ability, he tries to obtain a map of his district, and probably finds that no such map exists. Should he, perchance, light on one, it is probably of the most primitive description. By patient inquiry he finds that his field is, say, a hundred miles long, by perhaps as many in width, and he is told that there are thousands of villages within its borders. Bravely he resolves that, by the help of God, every town shall have a station—later, by Divine grace, he may be permitted to grow to the notion of "every village its church." In the meantime, however, every *town* a church is only a dream. He has no native staff, so cannot leave the city where services have already been instituted. His converts are by no means prepossessing,

save to himself, and, blessed ignorance! he sees swans even in his very geese. Why does he not hire a hall in each town, you ask? Because there are no halls to let, and if there were, twenty years or less ago nobody would have dared to hire them to a foreigner.

How, then, is he to proceed with his planless effort after church extension and organisation? Though preaching and evangelising with some regularity, he is still in the infant stage as a preacher, and badly equipped for wider work. Nevertheless he must do something; he cannot sit still. Blindly he avails himself of his various opportunities—blindly, yet led—and his work somehow begins to grow, "he knoweth not how," for the earth seems to "bring forth fruit of itself, first the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear." A man, Sunday by Sunday, comes from a village four miles away, and one fine day brings another. A city Christian would like to go to that village and hold a Sabbath service. He is gladly encouraged to do so, and goes again and again. By-and-by a small church is formed, nobody knows how, but there it is, and from it another springs, and from that still another.

The banyan tree illustrates the process. Independence is impossible in the Christian Church; interdependence is a necessity both to inception and growth. For we "are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Especially is this the case with church extension in China. The local stock, an offshoot of, and yet united to the older and sturdier stem ten thousand miles away, itself throws outwards and downwards other branches. These, banyan-like, branch and root, until they meet the farthest outpost of some other offshoot of this mighty tree of the Lord's right-hand planting, which, deep-rooted in Calvary's Mount, and watered with His own most precious blood, spreads ever onwards, till its farthest branch blossoms with carnation glory in the heart of China's most distant hamlet. For "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me."

Starting a branch church at Underbridge resulted in an outgrowth of a score more shoots; the branch that struck into the earth at Crystal Lily has added over a score more; Rainbow Bridge, or rather the small fishing hamlet of Oyster

Cove, has struck thirty other roots; Greenfields a similar number, and so on. How did this come about? How are the services conducted? What attempt is being made at Church government? These are points this chapter is meant to elucidate.

First, then, how does a church come into existence? Here is a concrete instance. In the year 1886, or 1887, I started an opium refuge on our city church premises, and, by the aid of simple remedies, helped not a few in bondage to free themselves, at any rate temporarily, from their chain. Our treatment was as much moral as physical, for, recognising the hopelessness of permanently liberating these men—whose will power had been so severely shaken by indulgence in so demoralising a habit—except by the aid of a Power external to themselves, earnest prayer was daily offered, in which they all joined. It was, moreover, expressly urged upon them that the only certain cure was a change of heart, of life, and of companionship, which could only be obtained through Christ Jesus and His Church. Our correctness in this attitude, the subsequent lives of these men sufficiently confirmed.

One result of our attempt to do the best we knew for this unfortunate class was, that four men from Pi-lien, Crystal Lily, who had been cured in our small refuge, returned home, resolved to start a branch church in their village of 3000 inhabitants, a village situated among glorious mountains, more than thirty miles north-west of the city. Their outfit consisted of four hymn-books and a couple of New Testaments, and, after reaching home, they met together every evening and on Sundays, to sing from the hymn-books and read and expound to each other the Testament. What sort of a service it was they thus held the reader may exercise his ingenuity by endeavouring to imagine, and he will fail. Not one of them had learnt to sing, so perforce they all sang different tunes, all original compositions, and each in a different key. Not one of these men could read correctly, and, even had he been able to do so, his ignorance of Christian terms, and of the meaning of Scripture teaching, would have made his exposition at least quaint, probably heterodox enough to have had him excommunicated from every Church

in Christendom. Neither had any one of them prayed, or heard prayer, before his entry into the refuge, where he had remained less than ten days, much of the time in physical weakness and considerable distress. Indeed, the very word we use for prayer, *tao-kao*, was, in their ignorance, perverted to *pao-kao*, " protective information."

This purely native attempt at church foundation continued for a month or two, when, learning that I was to visit the neighbourhood on an evangelistic tour, they sent word begging me to visit them also, which I was only too pleased to do. The journey to their beautifully situated village was through delightful scenery. On the way I was met by one of the four, who was so much changed for the better, so stout and healthy-looking, that it was difficult to recognise him. At his home a feast had been provided, and after " enjoying " it, we adjourned to an adjacent ancestral hall, where we spent a long and profitable evening, telling our Message to the assembled crowd. The result was that some others now decided to join in forming a church, and begged that we would send a preacher to assist them.

At that, the first publication of the gospel in Crystal Lily, a youth of twenty was present, who there and then made up his mind to know more about what had been said. He became an inquirer, later was admitted to Church fellowship, soon went out at his own expense as a local preacher, was formally appointed in due course, and very early admitted to the native ministry, despite objections raised against his youth by some of the seniors. That young man was Mr " Summer," who became the ablest preacher, the most devoted worker, the best organiser, and the bravest defender of Christianity that our work has ever seen. Shall we ever look upon his like again ? He verily gave his life for the gospel.

We were very short-handed in those days—it is, indeed, a condition which may be described as chronic. We had only one preacher, and yet had been bold enough to start five or six out-stations ; but, determined that this opportunity at Crystal Lily should not be lost, we promised to send our only preacher, Mr Chang, a man of fine spirit, who later wore himself out with earnest preaching and hard travelling.

This increase in the demand for preachers induced us to use whatever raw material we could lay our hands upon, resulting in the establishment of a Pauline order of workers, men who earned their living during the week, and went out for the week-end to take services at whatever stations they might be appointed. Many of them had, and still have, better qualities of leg than head, being better itinerants than preachers. Nevertheless our "local preachers" are to-day the backbone of the work in Wenchow, as they are the "backbone of Methodism" in England. Of the hundred and fifty of our services held Sunday by Sunday in this district, over a hundred are conducted by this fine body of men, who also form our nursery ground for the native ministry.

When Mr Chang arrived at Crystal Lily, his first business, after obtaining a resting-place for himself in the home of one of the inquirers, was to arrange a place of meeting. This is by no means so easy as to the reader may appear. In England there is no difficulty in holding services in the humblest cottage, and there having perfect privacy, for an Englishman's home is his castle. Very different is the Chinaman's home. A man of the masses cannot afford a house all to himself. He has to content himself with a kitchen and a bedroom, only separated from his neighbours by a thin board partition, which partition is almost more a hindrance than an aid to privacy, for what is more tempting to the eye than a hole, or a crack between two ill-fitting boards!

To every house there is a large common room, supposed to be kept for visitors or for state occasions such as funerals or weddings, but in reality given very much over to farm implements and produce. I once preached in such a "hall" or drawing-room, with a coffin behind me. Nor was the coffin empty, for it had encased a corpse for the preceding six months, awaiting a propitious date for interment. I have preached in many such "drawing-rooms," where a litter of pigs, grumbling loudly at the length and tastelessness of my sermon, has occupied one corner; the sweepings of the floor—specially broomed for the occasion, and probably in my very presence—have occupied another; agricultural implements have been ranged on both sides and above me;

a smoky, chimneyless, kerosene lamp has choked freedom of utterance ; and the room, to the very edge of the verandah outside has been packed with a crowd of evaporating farmers, who, tired though they were with their day's toil, have stood for two hours listening to the speakers, native and foreign.

Mr Chang was fortunate in persuading the neighbours of the man who gave me the feast on my first visit to Crystal Lily, to assent to the meetings being held in the common "hall," or drawing-room of their house. In some such room as this half our churches still meet, but in so large a village such an arrangement could only be temporary. The system has many disadvantages, for perhaps a wedding is to occur, and then our "hall" must be handed over for several days to the happy family. Or, perhaps, a neighbour dies, and then in some cases there is trouble, for the relatives lay the blame at the door of the Church, as who can doubt that all this singing and praying is bad for the health both of gods and ancestors, and is driving them out of the house ? At heart we fully expect it will do so some day.

In the case of Crystal Lily, as the number of converts increased, a more suitable place than the one in whch we were meeting soon became necessary. Such was happily found in a large ancestral temple, in which some of the converts had an interest. The suggestion was made that we should hire the building, but—would the members of this branch of the clan be willing ? Was it likely they would consent to the religion which was opposed, not only to idols but to ancestral worship, finding a home within their temple walls ! To my amazement, however, all who had an interest in the temple gave their assent, and we hired it for a very small sum per annum, on the reasonable condition that we should give way to the clan on the occasion of its annual gathering.

In this commodious hall we held services week by week for many years. When, later, it became too small for our growing congregation, we were able to leave it in decidedly better condition than we found it, and were, moreover, allowed to rent a much larger one, in which we met till last autumn, when our lovely new church was opened, the most

beautiful building we have, towards which our Crystal Lily people contributed most handsomely.

A sense of incongruity obtrudes itself on first holding Christian worship in an ancestral temple. Imagine such a place if you can. The building is, let us say, eighty feet long by thirty deep. A fifth of its length is partitioned off at either end—for kitchen, and rooms for general use ; the main hall is open from end to end towards the courtyard, somewhat like what a country chapel in England would be with its side-wall taken out. The preacher faces this open chasm, through which the weather comes at will ; his congregation has its tails towards it, and is seated on narrow, backless benches of treble hardness. He places his Bible and hymn-book on the sacrificial table or altar in front of him ; behind are ranged the dusty, wooden tablets of the deceased progenitors ; and, on the partition wall at the back of them, is sometimes painted a representation of the founder of this particular branch of the clan. Farther on, to the right and left of the principal shrine, are paintings, on the one hand of the guardian deity of the land, and on the other of some other deity.

In front of the tablets and deities are numerous, shallow, oblong bowls for sticks of incense (" joss-sticks "), which are stuck upright into the ashes contained in the bowl. All is in the usual state of dirt and untidiness common to China, for the temples of this land are, as some one remarked of the negro, picturesque objects at a distance that will not bear a closer inspection. Yet we have counted it a privilege to be permitted to hire more than ten such halls for Church purposes, a privilege extremely unusual in China. That we are able to rent such buildings at all is the highest testimony that can be given to the character of our converts, and the respect in which they are held by their fellow-clansmen. Nor is this due to any pandering to idolatry on the part of our people, who are uncompromisingly Puritan. If we could only induce the people everywhere to turn these ancestral temples to Christian uses, very little chapel building would be necessary, for with little alteration they are well adapted for Christian meeting-places.

Up to the present our services have been of the simplest description, so simple that unlearned men might conduct

them with profit to others. Hymns, voluntary prayer, Scripture reading, and an exhortation, such is our type of service in both town and country. Choirs, organs, and increased ornateness, refinement, and beauty of service are often longed for by the missionary, but in the initial stages of the work they are impossible, and, even if possible, might prove rather a hindrance than a help to progress. Even now, many who hear the gospel and are inclined towards it, are kept away by fear of our hymn-book! They, in their ignorance, think Christians are compelled to learn to read hymns, and they dread their inability. Often have I heard interested hearers say, " Tsz p'o 'oh-fu-ch'i," " I fear I could not learn." Beauty and charm in our services are therefore entirely lacking; they will come as the Church—decays, says one, as it grows in *grace*, says another.

The singing is more remarkable for energy than for sweetness. Every man, woman, and child puts forth the utmost effort of throat and chest, and, in verity, " lifts high the lofty *strain*." As to tone, the volume of nasal sound would move a pronounced Yankee to shake hands with them all round. The Chinese are fond of music, but musical tastes differ even in Europe, and the Chinaman's fancy is for music of the squeaky order, a stage inferior to the bagpipe.

Knowing nothing whatever of harmony, they sing only the air, hence in our services treble, alto, tenor, and bass voices all sing the same note, often with an interval of two octaves. Singing in unison is very charming for a change, but when it is all and always unison, one who has been accustomed to richer forms finds it truly mono-ton-ous. To the Chinaman, however, even this form of singing is a novelty, for the only approach to congregational singing outside Christianity is the drone of the Buddhist monk. We are introducing an absolutely new art into Chinese life.

Years ago, when our hymn singing was a distressing jumble, I deemed it best to put a narrow limit on the number of our tunes, in order to be rid of the painful sense of dissension and strife that the singing of a hymn produced. Hence, to this day, we have only one long metre, one common metre, one short metre, and so on. There are occasional disadvantages in this system, as, for instance, when the preacher chooses

nothing but common metres, and the same tune has to be sung three or even four times during a service ; but such is a rare, almost unknown event, for our preachers are generally too bright for this sort of repetition. The general result of limitation in the number of tunes has been excellent, for in town and country we have for China really good singing ; accord has taken the place of discord, and the volume of sound is at times prodigious.

As to instrumental music, a native flute, a kind of clarionet, and the two-stringed fiddle have been introduced into a few village services where there happens to be sufficient talent for so great an undertaking, and in some places they are effective, especially when the congregation starts the tune in the same key as the band. Occasionally one's Sunday feelings are jarred by hearing the band play ballads of a distinctly earthly order—their only music—immediately before the service ; nevertheless, perhaps indeed therefore, we hope to see this experiment developed on superior lines some day. Christianity has come to elevate every form of life in the world, and the Chinaman must not be deprived of his share.

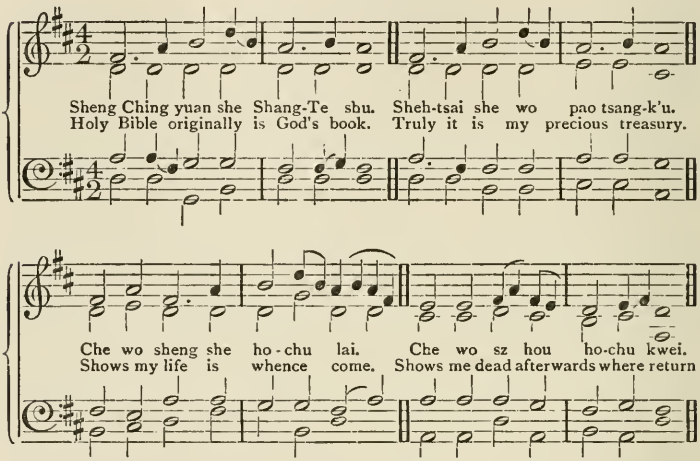
Fifteen years ago, I engaged a couple of native musicians to come and deprive me of my summer afternoon siesta by teaching me their native music, including their native notation. It was an interesting and informing experiment, and from that time Chinese music has ceased to be an agony of squeakery. There is method in it, and, to be effective, no mean powers of execution are demanded.

The outcome of these studies was a paper read before the Ningpo Missionary Association, and published in the *Chinese Recorder*, with special reference to the feasibility of improving our Church music on Chinese lines, even of modifying some of the better-class ballads for congregational use. Since then a few have been adapted in Ningpo and elsewhere, but, up to the present, our efforts here have been limited. The following specimen is adapted from the ballad known as the Mo Li Hwa, or "Jasmine Flower." As it is in the pentatonic scale, the common scale of the country, and, probably the oldest existing scale in the world, it is easily learned by the people. Half tones are impossible to the untrained, for which reason fourths and sevenths are not used, hence the pentatonic, or five-tone

scale. Hence, also, in any English tune containing half tones, or fourths and sevenths, the native naturally sings the nearest pentatonic note, with weird effect on the cultivated nerves of the hyper-sensitive foreigner.

The words below are a translation into "Mandarin" of "Holy Bible, Book Divine."

Tune—"Jasmine Flower." 7s.



Our preachers vary as much as do those at home. We have sermons of all kinds and qualities, good, bad, and indifferent; quiet, declamatory, seldom argumentative, sometimes dramatic. None of them rise to the spiritual height, or have the mystic glow, or develop the same pathos that is reached in the best home pulpits; it may take generations of Christian experience to evolve the rich spiritual insight, and even the vocabulary for expressing it, that is the heritage of our influential English minister. But the Chinese preacher's sermon is suited to his audience, being practical, parabolic, persuasive.

Where does our preacher come from? What class does he belong to? How is he trained? And what is his pay? These are all questions of first-rate importance in the organisation of a Mission, for what is a Mission without preachers!

Where he comes from, we know not. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth." He comes a pagan and idolater to our service. The Word lays hold of him. He becomes a convert and attends service regularly. He possesses some gift of speech above his fellows, and, as local preachers are required, in process of time he is pressed into the service. Subsequently he proves himself superior to his co-workers, both as preacher and business man, and after a time is recommended for ten days' Scripture training in the Pastor's City Class. There he shows his worth, and ultimately is appointed as Evangelist, or as Assistant Pastor under a senior. Such is all the teaching the majority have hitherto been able to obtain, nor have they as yet needed much more; but the day is now dawning when men, however well educated, must have a specific course of training. Three young men have already undergone such a course in our College, and are now our ablest preachers.

Our preachers, except in a few instances, and those exceptions by no means our least useful men, do not come to us without education. Two were graduates before joining us, and several have sat for the degree examination. Others were schoolmasters, or tradesmen with fair education. Men with such a mental training as these readily find "professors" in the books we are able to put into their hands, and it is rather character training they need at the hands of their pastor than mental development. If the missionary be wise in Scripture exposition, trained in homiletics, and gifted in prayer, three months with such men as these will produce a profound and lasting influence on their lives. Alas! so many are the demands on the missionary's time, and so insistent are the demands for the man himself to get to work, that even this short time is well-nigh impossible, especially as only one such individual turns up at a time, and to spend several hours a day with him alone seems unjustifiable.

As to the pay they receive, it is rated a little higher than the ordinary pay of a native schoolmaster, a class proverbially the most ill-paid in this country, although China has hitherto boasted so loudly of its learning. Our scale has hitherto been four or five dollars (eight or ten shillings) a month, with

travelling expenses, food included, during all the time he is away from his home, but the scale of pay will soon have to be somewhat increased. Nearly all our pastors have a little property and live in their own houses, hence they are appointed one Sunday a month near their own homes, or two Sundays together in every second month, and the rest of the time they spend at their stations. By this means they are not long separated from wife and family, and the mission is saved serious expense in the renting, furnishing, and general upkeep of pastors' houses. Moreover, many of these men would find it extremely difficult to remove from their ancestral surroundings, to say nothing of lack of qualification on the part of the wives of some of them.

How did we obtain our first preacher? The first we used was borrowed, but our own first—there he stands before me now, the anointed of God, though perhaps you would not think so judging by externals. Dear old Chang! he is in heaven. This chapter is hardly the place for his story. It shall come later. Suffice it that he was sent to us of God. We did not seek him, did not indeed know where or how to seek such a man, but we longed for him with all our hearts. Ignorant of letters though he was, the Church of God in Wenchow, and our own Mission especially, will ever owe to him an unredeemable debt.

Self-support, while still in its infancy, is by no means neglected. A collection is taken every Sunday morning in the city church, and in many of the country churches a similar collection, or an annual subscription, is made, generally at harvest time, towards church expenses. It must be borne in mind that the people as a whole are poor, many of them living a mere hand-to-mouth existence. In numerous villages the ordinary copper cash—it takes forty of these to make a penny—is quite a scarce commodity, and to expect a collection of even these is to be disappointed. Collections in kind, rice, potatoes, eggs, are sometimes made, but these are cumbrous and difficult to manage.

The Chinese do not usually give well for general purposes; that is a national characteristic; but for specific objects, buildings, furniture, individual poor, etc., our Christians are ready to give according to their ability. For instance, the

members of our Crystal Lily Circuit have just subscribed a thousand dollars towards their new church; the members at Rainbow Bridge raised four hundred towards their new premises a few years ago, and have recently collected a similar sum for the larger building which has just been erected; the members at Lewmarket have promised a like amount; so have the Greenfields Christians; at three small and poor places sums of four hundred, two hundred, and one hundred respectively have just been raised. The City Christians two years ago spent over four hundred dollars in painting and furnishing our city church, which is one of the most commodious in China, and now nearly twenty other village churches are collecting funds to provide themselves with suitable premises.

The question of self-support must also be viewed in the light of Sabbath observance. When a man becomes a Christian he naturally desires to observe the Lord's Day. This is easy enough in England, where work is suspended and shops are closed on that day; or in Africa, where work is undertaken as a rest from rest. In China, however, work is the chief thing in life, and there is no such thing as Sunday, except once in a twelvemonth, at the New Year, when everybody takes a week of Sundays all at once. Consequently, on a man becoming a Christian, in a great many cases, especially in the towns, he immediately loses one day's pay in seven. In order to keep the Sabbath and make ends meet, some of the very poor Christians have to live very frugally on the Sabbath, a few even know what it is to fast on that day. This loss of a seventh of a man's income naturally impairs very seriously his giving powers.

There is no doubt that many do not join us through fear of the Sabbath. To provide for this class of persons, I many years ago instituted evening services in various parts of the city, both on Sundays and week-nights, and similar services are also held in many of our country stations. In the city they are well attended, four of them having each a regular attendance of sixty to a hundred, and all have proved excellent feeders of the Church.

Sabbath observance is especially difficult for the shop-keeping class and their servants, and it is always important for the missionary to bear in mind that "the Sabbath was

made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Nevertheless, not a few of our people have felt the value of the day of rest sufficiently to prefer losing their situations rather than forfeit the opportunity for spiritual exercise. Of course the burden does not press equally on all classes; farmers, for instance, need be but little affected by it, save at sowing and harvest times, and in dry seasons, when every hour must be spent in pumping water into the fields.

This difficulty about Sabbath observance induced some of the earlier missionaries to provide a dinner in the middle of the day for their converts. Such was no doubt a good and kindly custom when the numbers might be counted on the fingers, but with larger congregations it naturally became not only a burden to the missionary, but a temptation to the would-be "rice Christian." In these days also, in the street chapels it was customary for pipes, tobacco, and tea to be provided, wherewith to open up conversation; but that is all a matter of the long distant past, good enough in its day, but now no longer needed.

In our own work, the first attempt at self-support was to induce the country churches to find their own places of worship, and now they do so in eighty per cent. of our stations. In some cases this involves the renting of an ancestral hall or a room. As a rule, however, it does not demand the raising of money, but simply that some member lend his house on Sundays, and on certain week evenings. In some cases several houses, even in separate villages, take the services in turn. The loan of such a house is by no means as small a matter as may appear on the surface, for it involves the housekeeper in both trouble and expense—trouble in putting the room in order, and littering his house with borrowed benches; expense in providing—free for all comers—the usual huge teapot of tea; firing to cook the food of those who come a distance; and bowls, etc., from which they may eat. Hence our people, when stating the number of a congregation, seldom tell the number of heads, but follow the native fashion, and speak of the number of tables present, Chinese tables being built on a regulation pattern, and all made to seat eight.

The next step in advance was to stop the supply of lamp

oil. At first it was necessary to help the infant church by providing both lamp and oil for every new station, in order that the evening services might not be conducted in Stygian darkness. In those days a foreign lamp was rarely seen up country—such an article was counted a great luxury; but the people are now following our example, and there is a growing trade in lamps. With an increasing number of stations, however, the providing of lamp oil became a burden on the funds, and now nearly all the churches provide their own. In these days, when a number of inquirers, or members, think the time has come to have a church in their own village, we generally require that they provide all the material themselves, room, furniture, oil, firing, lamps—everything except the preachers' expenses.

A further step in advance was made a few years ago, which we have good reason to hope will also ultimately cover the item of preachers' salaries and expenses. A rule was made that each church should subscribe a minimum of two dollars a year towards circuit expenses. We are not prepared to name the happy day when this expectation will be fully realised, as up to the present not half the churches have been capable of even living up to so moderate a regulation. It must be borne in mind that ten years ago two-thirds of these churches did not exist, and to meet the initial local provision required of them has been no inconsiderable strain.

Were it necessary for us to provide each village church with a native pastor, even granted that the difficulty of finding men could be overcome, the expense would be far beyond the reach of our grant from home. Hence our hope for self-support lies in the small expense involved in the employment of lay preachers. These have an allowance for travelling expenses at the rate of fifteen cents (4d.) a Sunday, twenty-five cents if away a night, and forty if away two nights. Appointments to stations over forty *li* (thirteen miles) distant from their homes carry an additional allowance of ten cents for ten *li*. The distances travelled are great, the exposure to all kinds of weather serious and trying, the necessity for decent clothes unavoidable, and the extra claims on their time for praying with the sick, and for wedding

and funeral services not inconsiderable ; so that the average of something less than $2 a month earned by these men is not even a coolie's hire, and out of it they pay their own boat fare, and find their own food.

A last and most important step in advance was made by our Crystal Lily Circuit last spring. This circuit, consisting of twenty churches, resolved to raise a Circuit Endowment Fund. They requested us to maintain our present circuit grant for five years, at the end of that period the grant to be reduced by half, and at the expiry of ten years to cease entirely for all existing work. To these proposals we yielded a delighted acceptance. Since then all our other circuits have promised to institute a similar fund, and already we have over $200 in hand. Even should there be delay in the realisation of this programme, it is the most notable step forward yet made by our people, and is cause for profound gratitude and lively hope.

Several of our local preachers are entirely self-supporting, and a few days ago the leader of a small church came in to say that in future his church was prepared to undertake all its own local preachers' expenses, paying them week by week. We shall make much of this at our coming circuit meetings, in the hope of stimulating other churches to follow so excellent an example.

As to Church government, seven years ago the time seemed to have arrived for the promulgation of some definite system, and the formal association with us of suitable officers. The usual Methodist basis of church, circuit, and district was adopted, and Wenchow having been formed into a separate district by our Annual Assembly in England, it now has seven circuits, and a hundred and fifty churches. Our church officers, apart from the missionaries, are pastor, assistant-pastor, local preacher, and leader. When the time comes for the formation of church meetings the leaders will be appointed thereat. During the present time of ignorance they are appointed by the missionary, in consultation with the circuit pastors and the principal members of the churches. At the circuit meetings local preachers are nominated, and candidates for the native ministry receive their recommendation, but the latter are appointed by the Annual District Meeting. Up

OUR DISTRICT MEETING REPRESENTATIVES, 1904

to the present there has been no formal ordination or public reception.

Rather than import the fully developed machinery of Church government to which our home churches have through a long period become gradually accustomed, we deem it better to advance with slower steps and introduce new rules to suit new needs. An elaborate organisation introduced before its time, produces misunderstandings, heart-burnings, and strife. The Church of China will ultimately evolve its own machinery of government, and the Chinese, being democrats by nature, and ruling their own clan affairs with ability, will find no difficulty in accepting, and successfully working, an organisation as democratic as that of the most liberal of the Methodist Churches.

Our circuit meetings are often followed by several days of Bible study for the benefit of the local preachers, and an occasional ten days' training in the city for the ablest of these has enabled us to choose the men best qualified for recommendation, through the circuit meeting, to the native ministry.

One other item of value in connection with Church extension in its earlier stages is perhaps worth mention before closing this chapter. Many years ago, when our country work was beginning to grow, I published a small book of services, which was sold at the rate of seventy cash a copy (2d.). It consisted of seventy of our simplest hymns, a number of short prayers, mostly taken from the Book of Common Prayer, a lesson from the New Testament for each Sunday of the year, an order of service, and a brief catechism. This book was carried to many places where a preacher could not be supplied, and was of much help in tiding a number of beginners over the critical period that elapsed until we were able to supply a man, and put the name of the village on our preachers' plan. This book was so arranged that it could everywhere be used alongside our ordinary hymn-book. About two thousand were printed and sold, and though they have many years been out of print, a stray copy may still occasionally be met with in our country stations.

What has been done in the way of Church establishment, extension, and organisation has been done gradually. It is

the growth of years ; nothing has been forced. Some things have been planned, and a general ideal kept ever before the mind ; but what has been achieved has been achieved step by step with what patience in us lay. While there is much to be thankful for, much more remains to be done than has been done ; the musical portion of our services calls for improvement, self-support requires persistent fostering, an educated ministry is demanded, women's work needs development, and more, much more lies in our hearts that we should like to do, were we not, like most Mission stations, suffering from chronic insufficiency of staff and funds.

V

PASTORAL VISITATION

"In journeyings often, in perils in weariness and painfulness; beside those things that are without, the care of all the churches."

Our missionary is not long in discovering, and not with unmitigated joy, that his people are great believers in Pastoral Visitation, by which of course is meant—this being topsy-turvy land—visitation of, and not by, the pastor. Let not the minister at home be envious, for less offence may be given by paying a short visit than by turning out a long visitor. Moreover, the Chinese are an early-rising nation, and hesitate not at early calls. Not a few are the British mandarins who have bowed to the inevitable, and interviewed their Chinese fellows unbathed and breakfastless. Even the Emperor is expected to receive his Ministers of State at four in the morning, which brings to mind the mediæval custom of Europe, when the king—and queen too, for the matter of that—received their ministers in bed.

Even so, the pastor in China discovers that his flock is prepared to call quite early, indeed is equally willing, if but slightly encouraged, to see him before he gets up or is dressed. Such an experience I have had more than once, without being put to the trouble of encouraging it. For instance, some years ago, a young Christian, bent on pastoral visitation, one fine morning found his way around the verandah, and, poking his head into my bath-room window, calmly remarked with never a blush, "The pastor is having a bath," nor did he hurry away. On another occasion, on the first of January 1896, though with greater justification, and even to my undressed gratification, a fine Christian man—referred to later in this chapter—who had suffered long imprisonment for Christ's sake and just been released, found his way very early

in the morning to my bedroom, and flung himself at my bedside weeping glad tears—nor was I long in joining him there.

There is, of course, another form of visitation, in which our missionary himself is the guest, for his country churches must be supervised with stringent regularity, and as frequently as possible, if he wishes to see them grow strong and healthy. Again, may we add, let not the home pastor be envious. Long journeys, all sorts of weather, every kind of room and bed except the clean and comfortable, added to which are the inquisitive, staring, unwashed, uncurried crowds! Easy is it for a China missionary to understand our Lord's yearning for "the desert place" and the "mountain." Nevertheless the law of compensations is always at work, and variety lends spice even to country itineration.

By way of example, last Saturday Mr Sharman and I set off for Outer Sichi, and after travelling several hours, and spending the night in the boat, each of us preached three times in two different villages three miles apart, examined and baptised candidates, administered the Lord's Supper, and discussed matters of more or less importance with several parties. On the Monday we held our half-yearly circuit meeting, and had an excellent time with the preachers and leaders. It was on the Sunday, however, that we met with an item of interest which caused no little excitement in the village first visited.

The high-road from the landing-place to our destination led over a hill. Mr Sharman's destination being farther in than mine, I started later, and, on reaching the top of the hill, found a number of people gathered around a large flag, which hung limp in the rain from the top of a bamboo pole. An old grey-bearded gentleman who hails from a village ten miles inland, and whom I have known for many years, came forward to tell me that this was a flag of rebellion, ostensibly set up by the "Red Lamp Society." Not one of the people about cared to remove the flag, lest, on the one hand, he should incur the hatred of the Red Lamp Society, or, on the other, being caught with the flag in his possession, he should be imprisoned and possibly executed as a traitor.

Knowing, as I did, that the Red Lamp Society was powerless, save to cause unrest throughout this district, during the course of which our Christians would be the chief sufferers;

guessing also that the flag had been raised at this particular place in order to embroil the friendly village to which we were wending our way in difficulty with the authorities; and, finally, having no fear of being executed as a traitor, I deemed it a duty—after considerable hesitation—to annex the flag, and hand it over to the village beadle for conveyance to the city magistrate. The more technically correct plan would have been to send the beadle in person to remove the flag, but the Chinese constable has one feature in common with his English cousin—shall we say of the past generation?—he is often where he is not wanted, and seldom where he is; moreover, the longer the flag remained, the greater the cause of unrest. It had been put up during the night, and as the day was still young, not many people had seen it, but very soon hundreds of villagers (some whose homes were more than a hundred miles inland) would be hurrying along to catch the tide to Wenchow; so, waiving formality, I resolved that the loyal Chinese breeze just springing up should not be allowed to pollute itself and spread the seeds of discord by waving this emblem of woe in the air. The flag was speedily in the beadle's hands, and he made his way with it to the city.

It is not, however, either of the Sunday or the Monday that I would write, but of A Day's Visitation on returning to the City

First of all, then, our good doctor has decided to hold a general morning service for all in-patients in the Dispensary chapel, instead of the scattered services hitherto held in the wards, and somebody is required to take the service. So, at nine o'clock, we go in together, and find the halt, the lame, the maimed, and the blind awaiting us. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost" is the text at the head of the hymn-sheet handed around, and the audience listens attentively as the meaning is explained to them.

A young Christian is awaiting the conclusion of the brief service for an interview with the doctor. I had seen him on the preceding Sunday, and pitied his distress. His parents are both Christians, and, when his mother led him to me, it was painful to listen to the poor young fellow's sobs as he showed us his well-nigh sightless orbs. Contagious ophthalmia, so common and virulent in a country where morals are as low

as in this land, had left him with iritis, and one native doctor after another had been allowed to practise on him until his sight was ruined. Now, at my advice, two young Christians have brought him to see if Dr Plummer can restore to him even a glimmer of precious sight. Alas! little hope can be given, but he is received into the hospital for attention. (After prolonged rest and care, Dr Plummer succeeded in skilfully opening a false pupil for him, so that he can now see to go about.) Blindness is bad enough in England, but "the love of Christ" has mitigated its horrors; in China there are no mitigations. China's greatest need is this same constraining "love of Christ."

Back home again to find no chance for study. There are people waiting, half a score or more; but before they can be seen Chinese correspondence must receive attention. Here are a number of letters in Chinese to be read, and there sits the Chinese assistant awaiting instructions for replies, which he will have to compose and submit for revision before he can make a fair copy. These have been dealt with; "pastoral visitation" begins, and the first visitor is invited into the room.

He is a preacher in charge of a new station ten miles to the south. His looks are most woebegone, very different from those of the bright, lively Mr Yeh of yore. We know what is the matter and are deeply sorry for him. He has never heard of the immortal Don Quixote—a book which every missionary ought to read—but in his ardent desire to do good, he, like the immortal one, has fallen upon trouble. As his case throws light on a seamy side of Chinese life, it may be instructive to the reader if we explain it.

When Mr Yeh went to Ji-fung last year and opened our new station there, he soon found that his next door neighbour was a most undesirable personage. He was a burglar, a most notorious burglar, against whom scores of charges had been laid in the yamen, but who, up to the present, had always successfully avoided arrest. Mr Yeh was much troubled concerning this man, who, at the outset, showed himself anything but well disposed towards his new neighbour. Yeh came to me at the time, expressing an anxiety that was manifestly real. What was he to do? "Pray for him," I

had said; "God has changed the hearts of worse men than this. Pray for him." He had shaken his head doubtfully, seeming to think the burglar past praying for. A few months later, on my return from a brief visit to England, he came again to see me, smiling all over his face, and bringing with him a variety of burglars' tools of a distinctly unprepossessing appearance.

"The pastor remembers telling me to pray for my neighbour, the burglar?" he inquired. "Well, he has decided to turn over a new leaf, and has handed me over his tools."

Then he began to tell me the circumstances, and here is the

STORY OF A BURGLAR.

Liu Jung Mu was a canal boatman ten years ago, of respectable character, as respectability goes in China. One day a man with whom he was acquainted brought a load of tea, asking that he would take it in his boat to the city of Jui-an, and sell it for him. According to Liu's story, he took it in all good faith, sold it openly, and handed the proceeds to the man who employed him. What was his astonishment, a few days afterwards, to be arrested by the thief-catchers and charged with robbery. Knowing how difficult it would be to clear himself, he adopted the not unusual course of bribing the detectives. Herein lay his great mistake, for, having once bribed them, they came again and again, and the blackmail had to be maintained.

His next step downwards was actually to rob somebody, in order to satisfy the persistent claims of his persecutors, who threatened to arrest him, and not only lay the original charge at his door, but many more of which he was as guiltless as of that. These vultures must be fed, so, becoming bolder, he took to housebreaking. At first he only did so on a small scale, but as time passed the monthly demands of the thief-catchers became so heavy, and, as is usual in China, the thief and his catchers became such good friends that his boldness grew, and soon his notoriety spread afar.

Many were the plaints now laid against him in the yamens, many the warrants for his arrest, and much the pressure put upon the thief-catchers to secure him; but is it reasonable that

any man, much less a thief-catcher, should wilfully overturn his own rice-bowl ? With a sum varying from fifteen to forty dollars a month to divide amongst themselves, would it not be rank folly to kill a goose that regularly laid such golden eggs ?

So " Lao Liu," which may be translated " Good old Lew," remained " Lao Liu " to his friends the enemy, and his burglaries increased in number and importance. Thief and thief-takers had many a good time together, but the pressure of the unfortunate people, who resented the late hours kept by Liu, and the consequent emptiness of their cupboards and boxes, was sometimes strong enough to compel him to disgorge his takings. Not that he did so for nothing ; for he generally received redemption money sufficient to recompense him for his arduous toil.

He was always on good terms with his fellow-villagers, as he took care to cultivate the virtue of honesty with them. In fact, his honesty went to the extent of an occasional present to one here and another there, in consequence of which he became known amongst them as a very good fellow. This was also an additional protection in case of trouble. Like the unjust steward, he thereby prepared more homes for himself when his own was undergoing an unwonted spring clean—as it occasionally did—at the hands of a police whose character was more debased than his own. Through all the years of his life of robbery he was never arrested, nor even seen by those whom he robbed, and people came to speak of him as possessing wings and being able to fly.

Such, then, was Mr Yeh's neighbour, and such was the man for whom he had prayed. Liu had never loved the life, and for long had desired to quit it. Unless, however, he could raise some five hundred dollars to fee the yamen harpies, square the detectives, and give several theatrical displays, he could not obtain that which, in theory, is free and open to any Chinese robber who unfeignedly repents, namely, official pardon, liberating him from the consequences of his past misconduct.

Liu was never able to make so large a sum as this, for, if he lifted a thousand dollars' worth of goods, the outcry became too serious to withstand, and the stolen goods had to be

returned, to save his own and the thief-catchers' skins. For "skin for skin," even a Chinese thief will give up his stolen goods to avoid the bastinado, and, should he hesitate, his colleague the thief-catcher, to avoid a vicarious application of the yamen bamboo, will speedily find means of making him disgorge. Also, when Liu did succeed in keeping his haul, he was never able to obtain anything like its real value, for stolen goods sell at less than a quarter their worth, as any of my readers who have indulged in burglary must know from their own experience. In addition, he generally had to pay liberally the man who told him of a likely job, led him to it, and helped in carrying off the booty; and, then—this perpetual monthly allowance to the detectives! Really, how is it possible for an unfortunate burglar to raise the amount necessary for his emancipation? It is all he can do to keep a roof over his head. What a hard life it is!

Liu is the exact opposite of the villainous-looking scoundrel one usually associates with the profession; he is quiet, unassuming, and kindly disposed. When he came to the city to a Christian service for the first time, I was told before entering the pulpit that the ex-burglar was seated in the front bench. My eye roved over it; several strange faces were there, and I promptly discovered the burglar in a furtive-eyed man sitting in the middle. On descending from the pulpit, Mr Yeh approached me and said Liu was there. "Yes, I saw him," was my unhesitating reply. "Here he is," he presently added, but instead of the furtive-eyed man, a tall, well-built, quiet-looking country farmer looked out at me from a pair of ordinary eyes, that certainly suggested nothing of the thief and robber. There appeared no pressing necessity to display my error. He bowed gravely and respectfully, and begged me to help him make a fresh start in life. He was willing, said he, to do anything in order to be free from demands which drove him either to robbery or prison.

Knowing the horrors and hopelessness of a Chinese prison, it was difficult to advise him to surrender himself to that, as it was equally difficult to promise him any assistance in the matter, for we had no evidence of his sincerity save that of Mr Yeh, whose kind heart might have led him astray. Certain it was that Yeh had fallen in love with Liu, and was prepared

to stake his reputation on the man's sincerity. The Christians, however, were divided into two camps, neither of which knew the man save by repute. One camp objected to so notorious a character being welcomed till he had proved his change of life; the other rejoiced, though "with fear and trembling," over his conversion. Hence, as with St Paul at Damascus, so here—and maybe it is for the Church's safety that such should be the case—there were few who were prepared to give him a warm, whole-hearted welcome.

When Yeh first came on Liu's behalf, he brought bonds from some of the elders of Liu's clan, holding themselves surety for his future good behaviour. Yeh was very desirous these bonds should be sent to the magistrate, with a request that mercy be shown towards the late burglar. Though on friendly terms with the magistrate, I could not see my way to any such precipitate action. The man must prove his sincerity by a longer probation. "Yes," said Yeh, "but how is he to avoid arrest? The 'swift horses' (detectives) are now his sworn foes, as he no longer has any funds out of which to pay their demands." I was sorry, but still could not see any immediate way to help him. He must hide when the detectives sought him, or, better still, give himself up and trust in God.

Five months have passed since he began to attend services. At first he came, not so much out of love for Christianity, as to seek a way of escape from his apparent fate; now he seems to have become influenced by the gospel itself. He has also, with much difficulty, succeeded in evading arrest, but at last the "swift as horses" are again on his track, and this time they mean business. Yeh sees no other way than to bring Liu and the bondsmen to plead in person with me. Liu comes, and goes—straight from my house into the arms of his quondam friends, who have been on the watch for him. No longer is he "Good old Lew," but thief, robber, scoundrel, everything vile. And now he is in prison, and poor Yeh has cried his eyes hollow with grief.

Unable to refrain any longer, I have sent to the magistrate the bonds signed by the elders, together with a plain statement of the attempt Liu has made at reform, and left the

IN PRISON

case to the magistrate's mercy. He has returned a kind reply, promising that if it is discovered that Liu has done nothing illegal during the last five months, a way shall be found to release him. Yeh knows that Liu has been straight all these months, for they have lived all the time under the same roof. A fortnight has passed, rumours are abroad of the prisoner's sufferings, but Yeh has failed to obtain an interview with him; and if the fortnight has told as badly on the prisoner as it has on Yeh, he must be in a decidedly bad way. Yeh knows the secret tortures that prisoners have often to undergo at the hands of prison warders—hanging up by the thumbs and tail for a whole night; stretching arms and legs to their full extent, and binding them thus for hours till the sufferer faints with the misery; starvation, beating, and other forms of unofficial torture, for the purpose of inducing the prisoner either to pay over money, or confess to crimes which he has probably never committed. So we spend an hour in sympathising with Mr Yeh, in pointing out the difficulties in the way of further aid, and in bracing him up. At last he goes out, still sadly woebegone, but, we trust, more hopeful.

Now comes in our old friend Ding Nger. We have not seen him for a long time. He too knows what the terrors of a Chinese prison are, for did he not endure them, for Christ's sake, rejoicing to suffer the loss of all things, willing even to lose life itself, rather than sign a document not to hold Christian services again in his native village? And what does Ding Nger want?

THE STORY OF A GAMBLER.

He has come about an old man of seventy, whose son has been a Christian for several years, and who himself began to attend our services at Fung Ling last year. The old man is in prison—another prison case! What is the cause of his imprisonment? Ostensibly, gambling and lottery keeping; in reality, to bring about the settlement of a lawsuit in regard to a hill in which he happens to be part owner with a clear title.

Gambling and lotteries are illegal in China, hence both

are exceedingly common. The Chinese gamble with dominoes dice, cards, bamboo tallies, cash, crickets, quail—everything, and at the New Year, when the nominal restrictions are suspended for ten days, almost every house seems to have its gaming-table. Much of the gambling at that time is comparatively harmless, but, generally speaking, it is a source of untold misery to great numbers of families in this country.

As to lotteries, although proclamations forbidding them are found everywhere, they are almost as ubiquitous as the proclamations. They are usually connected with a temple, and men travel long distances to worship at the shrine of its deity, to implore that they may draw the winning number. Some indeed worship at many other shrines, in addition to the one connected with the particular temple where the lottery is held. Many make a profession of running lotteries.

So, many years ago, our old septuagenarian was a gambler and ran lotteries. He had the misfortune to become notorious, and actually to have a warrant out for his arrest. But for quite a long period, though the name of gambler has stuck to him, he has ceased to take any prominent part in the gambling transactions of his neighbourhood, and for a number of years has been entirely free from the vice. Not that old age always reforms a gambler. I once had a long talk with an old scallywag of seventy, who boasted to me that he had been gambling for more than fifty years, and that it was the finest life a man could live! On the other hand, a youth once came, exposing the stump of his little finger, asking if I could give him some medicine to ease the pain. "What has happened to it?" I asked. "I have been unable to cut off gambling," he answered; "my money has gone, my clothes have gone, and my father is exceedingly angry, so I have taken a vow never to gamble again, and to register the vow have chopped off my little finger."

Old age and the example of his Christian son have told on our Fung Ling friend. For years he has seen the error of his ways, and now has commenced to prepare for the great change which awaits an old man's lagging footsteps. It is hard at his time of life, and after beginning to turn over

a very soiled leaf for a cleaner page, that the sins of years ago should lay him by the heels in the darkness and misery of a Chinese prison. There is neither Habeas Corpus Act nor Statute of Limitations in China. So, although the old warrant is hard to find, it is easy to do without one altogether; and, now that the old man has come to court to ask for the recognition of his rights, the simplest plan for the well-to-do opponent is to persuade a friend, who has the ear of the magistrate, to put a false view of the matter before his Worship. And his Worship may as well save himself trouble by locking up the old man on another charge, which will probably induce him not to trouble the court further about his rights, for there are more ways of settling a claim than by granting it.

Both father and son have been squeezed "as dry as a chip," as Ding Nger puts it. Can I help in rescuing the old man? He is too infirm to bear the misery and sufferings of the prison. I am sorry, but cannot render any immediate assistance in the matter, can only advise him to give up his rights, and point out that the teaching of Jesus Christ is that, if a man wants his inner garment, it is well to let him have the outer also, rather than quarrel and go to law about it. Finally, Ding Nger arranges to put the whole case into the form of a written petition for my enlightenment, in the hope that a favourable opportunity will arise for rendering assistance —not that such a thing is likely. Ding Nger has come at his own expense forty miles by water, and been waiting two days till my return from up-country. It is hard to see him go away unrelieved, but there is no justification for asking favours in this affair.

My next visitor is Mr Dzang, the pastor of the western half of the Yotsing Circuit. Six years ago he was an opium smoker and knew nothing of Christianity; now he is one of our most reliable pastors, and a good preacher. It is a pleasure to see him; though, by the way he glances at the long slip of paper he holds in his hand, his interview seems destined to last till tiffin. There are financial details to discuss, items also in regard to the excellent school we have there, a list of a score or more applicants for baptism to talk over, new openings to decide upon, and the need of a new chapel for

Yotsing City to consider. We have not funds for the last item, and the only thing to do is to find a house larger than the " pokey " little place we now occupy ; but house-hunting is even more difficult in China than in England, for people are many and houses all occupied. Mr Dzang also gives me particulars of the misbehaviour of one of his flock, whose chief, a salt-tax official, has written a letter informing me of the man's dismissal and the reason therefor. This requires a letter of acknowledgment and approval, for the official has shown considerable courtesy in thus writing. The incident also involves discussion as to how the transgressor is to be dealt with by the Church. At last Mr Dzang has finished his list and departs.

Next comes in a nice little woman from the West Gate. She is in much trouble, for her husband, who is not a sweet-tempered man, has at her request put most of their own capital, as well as some that they have borrowed, into purchasing tea. They shipped $700 worth by junk to Foochow for sale, but, alas ! the junk, before so much as getting out of the river, ran on to a sandbank, in fine clear daylight, with never a wave on the water or a breeze in the air, and now lies with a broken back near the river's mouth. Its owner contrived to unload all his own things, but put difficulties in the way of salving the tea, and most of it has been carried off by the tide. What is to be done ? Can we offer any advice or assistance ? We can offer nothing but advice, and that is to find a couple of reliable men to interview the owner, who is said to be a landed proprietor, and endeavour to induce him to make some compensation, according to custom, especially seeing that the wreck resulted from the gross neglect and carelessness of his men. Poor woman, we are doubly sorry to be unable to offer anything but advice, as it is our unfortunate duty to be driven to expel her son from our College this week, for conduct which, in the interests of that institution, cannot be condoned.

Then come two men, a good old man, who founded one of our village churches, accompanied by a deaf friend, who has been a quiet, faithful Christian for many years. The latter is suffering oppression at the hands of another and more powerful man, also a " Christian," but whom we have had to severely rebuke more than once for un-Christian conduct. We

listen to, and try to understand the details of the story, and promise to send a deputation to the unjust brother, expostulate with him, induce him to cease his vexatious conduct, and come to a settlement in the matters in dispute.

Now two widows, and two or three elderly men, are introduced to tell a tale of woe. A lawsuit about a piece of hillside was settled some years ago, in which these people were adjudged its owners. A few weeks since one of the principal opponents, an opium smoker, took a couple of men on to the hill and sold to them the timber standing thereon, whereupon they at once began to cut it down. The sons of the rightful owners hearing thereof, naturally interfered, and the aggressors were sent about their business. The opium smoker, who was already as thin as "a bamboo slip," evidently suffering from advanced consumption, died within a fortnight. Though he had laid no complaint about being struck, and had been going round as usual, his friends could not dream of allowing such a good opportunity to pass for a row and a big squeeze. They, accordingly, invited his own and his wife's clansmen, and went in an armed band to the homes of the parties now present, demolishing them in revenge for the "murder," as they chose to style it.

Of course the usual lawsuit follows, as the other side have put in a capital charge against these Christians. We know their innocence, and deeply sympathise, but it is purely and simply a Chinese affair, not in any way arising from the parties now present being Christians. We can only condole with the sufferers, and advise an attempt at compromise. We point out that though they will certainly in the long run be able to clear themselves in court, yet it costs much money to reach the presence of his Worship. Moreover, he will probably, to save the other people's face, find it convenient to temporarily put one of the Christians' sons in prison, pending the squaring of the case, and that will mean heavy payments to the jailers for keeping him, and more still for letting him go. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison; verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the

uttermost farthing. If any man sue thee at law to take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Excellent advice for the Chinese, and for some Englishmen also. My visitors are simple-minded people, willing to do anything for peace. In addition to the destruction of their houses, and a heavy sum paid for ransom at the time, they are now willing to pay even as much as $200 more rather than go into court, into which, indeed, not one of them has ever been in his or her lifetime; so we consent to ask two of our people to endeavour to settle the matter out of court. Alas! justice is hard to obtain in a country like this, where the judge is supposed to fill offices, the duties of which, were they ever performed, would tax the energies of a dozen men.

There were still more visitors to follow, but the reader has had enough. Not all days are like this one, either in the number of callers or the importance of the interests involved. There are worse days and worse cases, and better days also. This one actual day, however, will show that, though pastoral visitation in China does not take the orthodox English form, it is nevertheless a very real "visitation," and gives room—too much at times—for the play of all the emotions, as well as for the exercise of a large supply of patience, judgment, and discretion. Who is sufficient for these things? That we do not make more mistakes is due to our staff of faithful and experienced pastors and leaders, who have the well-being of the Church at heart, and who manfully decline to allow any wily fellow-countryman to take advantage of our simplicity.

In our "visitation" we come across much that is pathetic, much to distress, much to harass, much to grieve, but, thank God! much, very much to encourage also. And when unworthy brethren give us pain, this thought gives us cheer, that our pastoral visitation makes us fully acquainted with the worst as well as the best in our Church life, and we thank God for the ninety-five per cent. of our people who never darken our doors.

While re-reading this chapter another visitation has occurred that throws still further light on aspects of our life. Yesterday morning half-a-dozen men walked into my study. They were, as a matter of fact, two separate parties, and unacquainted with each other. One of them belonged to the

China Inland Mission, the other to our own. Both had come from the northern end of Cedar Stream, and the purport of their visit was to report that the secret society known as the Ko-lao-hwei is again active, and planning an outbreak for the middle of the present month, in which all Christians are to be slain and their property confiscated. One of these converts had succeeded, in a roundabout manner, in obtaining one of the printed proclamations of the enemy, a large anti-Christian sheet, which is to be posted on the 17th, the rising to take place on the 18th.

The disturbing news has already affected our respective congregations, the weak-kneed fearing to be exposed to the distresses that fell to the lot of so many of their number in 1900. Our people know well from personal experience the meaning of our Lord's words, " And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of war " ; nor can we blame some of them for not also reading further, " See that ye be not troubled." Having done my best to strengthen these men, and through them those to whom they would return, I forwarded to the mandarins the news we had received, asking them to kindly take the necessary steps for the preservation of peace. In the meantime we urge all our people not to be dismayed, for that nothing is likely to come of this matter save local irritation and annoyance from the ill-disposed, whom they should carefully avoid.

Again, a fortnight ago, on reaching the city I found two people waiting. It was Saturday evening, and time for Sunday preparation, which made them far from welcome. Yet between them they provided me with my next morning's sermon, and in blessing I was blessed. The two were an old woman of sixty and a respectable man of forty, both strangers to me. At my approach the old woman fell on her knees with sobs and tears, crying for help. What could I do for her, poor thing ? Her son had been foully murdered, only a few days before, by some of his native villagers, who hated him for being a Christian. The circumstances were as follows.

She had three sons, all Christians, decent, inoffensive young men. Their lot after conversion was a constant round of petty persecution, resulting in their pagan neighbours turning them out of their home. During this expulsion the second son was

badly beaten about the chest; soon afterwards he had an attack of hæmorrhage from the lungs, and died a few months later. The mother and two brothers rented another house, and faithfully continued attending services. Latterly, a number of fellow-villagers have come under their influence, and begun to join them, in consequence of which the opposition has become more embittered than ever.

One day, recently, a relative finding a wild animal amongst his chickens, chased and killed it in the fields. Returning home, he met the third son of the old widow, and said to him, "I have just killed a wild animal over yonder. You Christians aren't afraid of eating such things, you say (referring to fear of demon possession), so you are welcome to it." The family was very poor, seldom having an opportunity of eating meat, so the youth went in the direction indicated, found the animal, brought it home, cooked it, and the family ate it—no doubt with relish. Next day, one of the most violent of the enemy came along, and falsely declared they had killed and eaten his cat, which, however, turned up all right the day following. In the meantime this missing cat, not that he cared for it, formed a pretext for a row, so he immediately set to work to smash up all their crockery and furniture, including that sacred article the cooking stove, and in addition beat the mother and her younger son. Our local pastor, hearing of this outrage, put the matter into the hands of the elder of the clan, who ordered the trifling sum of $2 to be paid to the injured family, but also mulcted the ruffian's people in a fine of $20, the amount to be expended in the repair of the village bridge!

A fortnight afterwards the poor young Christian went on to the hillside to cut firing, when four of his foes seized him, hacked him with their grass-cutters' knives, and brained him with a carrying pole. Report says that when they had done the atrocious deed they commenced to dig a grave to bury him, but just then a terrific thunder-storm broke over the place and they hurriedly departed.

Now, the poor bereaved old widow cries for help, and what can one do? I have never yet asked for the arrest or punishment of any one, and cannot do so in this case. She must put in her plaint in person, and induce the magistrate to go

up and hold the usual inquest. She tells me the plaint is already entered, but the magistrate is neglectful, and her son is rapidly becoming unrecognisable, having already been dead several days. Will I urge him to go, so that they may put the poor youth into a coffin and out of sight? Being on friendly terms with the magistrate, I feel justified in acceding to her request, and send the poor sobbing old woman away with what poor comfort I may.

Next comes the man. He has brought a letter from our Rainbow Bridge pastor, who speaks kindly of him, says he has only come for comfort in distress, and will I do what I can to cheer him? What is his tale of woe? His boy, a youth of seventeen, was bathing last week, and—alas! the oft-told story — was drowned. The boy had attended service, not, it is true, as regularly as the father would have liked him to do, but he had been in the habit of coming. He was "a good lad at home, but, you know, he was young, and probably was not free from the sins of youth," and the father's heart was troubled. "Is my son saved, does the pastor think?" "Will the pastor please ask God to forgive the sins of my son's youth, and beg Him not to cast him out?"

What was I to say to this anxious father, who had come fifty miles to put this momentous question? Patiently and tenderly I tried to correct his wrong view of God, telling him that God is a Father, and not a Moloch—pointing out that he, for his son's sake, had been willing to come fifty long miles to ask this question, and did he think the Heavenly Father cared less for the drowned boy than an earthly father would? After correcting his view of God as far as in me lay, we knelt together, and asked the God of comfort to cheer the bereaved man, and reveal to him that his son was safe in the keeping of the Father, Who is best of all.

Before departing, he handed to me a dollar neatly wrapped in paper. "My son," he said, "occasionally earned small sums for himself, and here is a dollar which was his own. I cannot use it, and would like you to employ it in the church somehow." Next morning my audience was shown the dollar, and gave a most attentive hearing to a sermon on "Wrong Views of God."

VI

DISCIPLINE

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

THE fact that there are but few backsliders from the ranks of our members is, as just stated, largely due to the care exercised in admission to baptism. Nevertheless, there are "temptations, doubts, and fears" in China, as many and severe as anywhere in the world, and Chinese Christians are men of like passions and weaknesses with ourselves. Consequently some of them do fall from grace, and, for the sake of others as well as themselves, discipline is necessary.

Two main views are held of the Church and its discipline. One school sees in the Church an army, the army of the Lord, its pastors and leaders being officers possessing disciplinary powers, which take little note of the feelings of the disciplined. It was men of this school who, in England, during the last decade, excluded from Church fellowship a missionary for so far "falling from grace" as to sit at the Lord's table in China with other Christians, instead of only at the denominational table with the "elect." The other school sees in the Church a family in which discipline must have restoration for its chief aim. A good father may and will, if necessary, discipline his son; but while many a bad son has left the home of a good father, the latter hesitates long before he turns a bad son out of doors; he waits patiently for reform.

We have three modes of discipline—first, temporary exclusion from Communion; second, removal of the name from our register; and third, in scandalous cases, public expulsion by means of a written notice posted on the church door. For the present, except in gross cases requiring immediate action, discipline is the prerogative of the circuit in meeting assembled, so as to lift the matter above the influence of mere local

jealousy or intrigue. With the growth of the work and the local increase of members, this authority will some day be delegated to the local church, with perhaps right of appeal to the circuit meeting. In the meantime, the circuit is better able to take a calm view of a case than is a small church, wherein faction and party strife, while exceedingly unusual, are nevertheless always possible.

Behold then a circuit meeting! Here are gathered from near and far the native pastors of the circuit, its local preachers, and its leaders. The half-hour's exposition of Scripture is finished, the circuit levy collected from each leader, and now the attendance registers are one by one brought forward as each church is named and its leader requested to rise in his place. The questions are then put, "Are all the baptised members standing firm in the faith?" "Do they regularly attend divine service?" "Have any deaths occurred?" To each of these questions, as it is put, the leader gives his reply.

Here is a case in point. At our last city circuit meeting a leader, who is also a local preacher, replying to the first query, stated that there was in his book a name which ought to be expunged. Discussion showed that the man in question had failed in business and that the leader had suffered considerable loss, having in addition been led by the man into a certain amount of responsibility and difficulty. Ordinarily a just and fair-minded man, his own private loss had apparently biassed his opinion, and the meeting did not see its way to adopt so extreme a course as expulsion without further inquiry, especially as the delinquent was still attending our services. The fact that shame had driven the man to attempt suicide was also taken into consideration, and his case postponed for further inquiry, pending which he was formally suspended from Communion, from which indeed he had already withdrawn himself.

Opium-growing is another cause of a proportion of our cases of discipline. It is against the rules of our Church for any man to grow, sell, or smoke opium. This regulation entails much hardship on both pastor and people, and in certain districts the self-denial involved is great indeed. When it is borne in mind that the annual rental of good land fit for opium cultiva-

tion has doubled, and that opium is a spring crop, bringing in from four to eight times as much as any other spring crop, and not interfering with the important summer cultivation of rice, it is easy to see what a serious loss this self-denial means to the Christian farmer, very often making all the difference between daily comfort and the constant worry of daily indigence.

Can it be wondered, then, that when discipline is rendered necessary by the defection, through opium-growing, of a member of the Church, it is administered with many a heart-ache? Occasionally a member who has planted poppy abstains on his own initiative from Communion, recognising that he "cannot serve God and mammon." Many probationers deliberately refrain from baptism. A few months ago a young man, a would-be candidate for admission, stood longingly gazing at the row of men undergoing examination, but the pastor had said, "Before you sit down, first make up your mind about opium, whether you are sufficiently determined to keep it out of your fields." He could afford to do without this income, but his wife was not a Christian, and insisted on his growing the drug. When the last candidate had been passed, he turned sadly away, as did the rich young man on hearing our Lord's command, and we too were sad.

Gambling and lotteries are another source of defection. Both gambling and opium-smoking have their tap-root in monotony. The Chinese have no sports, nor any harmless amusements; they have scarcely any light literature, and as to newspapers, even if the mass of the people were able to read them, they are too modern to be of absorbing interest. Apart from the theatre, which, being in the open street or temple, is free to all, or an occasional game of chess, which again is a recreation only for the few, there is little left to relieve the daily monotony of their sordid life. There are no clubs, no reading-rooms, no Y.M.C.A.'s, no billiards or bagatelle, no lectures, no politics, no elections, no concerts, except the squall of an occasional blind ballad-singer. What is a man to do by way of amusement unless it be to "have a gamble" occasionally! Hence, gambling and lotteries, though forbidden by law, are the common and open experience of daily life, as is evidenced, first, by the number of proclamations with which the magistrate, himself perhaps

fond of a "flutter," decorates the city, giving "stringent orders" for the arrest of all delinquents, and, second, by the almost entire absence of any such arrests.

A Christian now and then falls into this temptation, and notice must be promptly taken of his misconduct. The circuit meeting appoints one or two of its members to interview the brother, and if he shows penitence no further action is taken. Should he again repeat his offence suspension follows. The Yotsing people are specially prone to this vice, as also to litigation, and our cases of discipline for gambling are almost wholly confined to that circuit. Three years ago, we there had to suspend a local preacher, well over sixty years of age, one of our oldest members in that neighbourhood, for a repeated fall. A month ago, also, I wrote to another local preacher in this same circuit, by request of the circuit meeting, demanding the immediate return of his "plan," because of his offence against this rule.

Idolatry seldom reclaims any of our converts. When once their minds are opened to the folly of worshipping a dumb idol, they seldom again yield to this form of superstition. Sometimes, if a member of the family be ill, a man may be driven to permit his unconverted wife or son to have their way in going before an idol; sometimes, if he himself be ill, his family or relatives, unknown to him, go and worship the gods on his account. Even these are rare events, and are invariably mentioned at the circuit meeting, resulting in an inquiry as to the Christian's own complicity or otherwise in the matter. After a man has had the courage, personally or vicariously, to take down and destroy his idols, he seldom goes back to them, and, if we had as few cases of discipline for moral delinquency as we have for relapse to idolatry, well-nigh all discipline might be relaxed.

Family opposition is an occasional cause for inquiry. Last week there was brought forward for consideration the name of a man who had been at only one or two services for nearly a year. His name had been discussed at the previous meeting, and now the report was made that he himself believed as sincerely as ever, but, the family being poor, his wife, who ruled the roost, would not let him come to service, insisting on his working on Sundays as of old. The meeting decided to leave

the matter, believing that time and the encouragement of his fellow-Christians would bring about the desired result.

Indifference, as in England, is another cause of relapse. Time, now as ever, makes some tired and faint. It is " they that endure to the end " who have joy, but the end seems a long way off to some. Moreover, there are no meretricious allurements about the Christian life and its religious services out here. On the contrary, it involves much hardship and constant restraint. The services also, away from the chief centres—nor need we except even these—are bare and unattractive save to the spiritually minded ; there are no choirs, no organs, no bright singing, often but mediocre preaching, no tea meetings, no sewing meetings, no " socials." Idolatry has some attractions ; Christianity has none, save the hidden attractions of the heart. In the native religions there are festivals three or four times a year, with their attendant colour, gaiety, theatricals, spectacular attractions, lanterns, dragon boats, and other varieties, which for the moment take something from the drabness of life ; but from these our people are debarred. Seeing that Christianity cannot offer any seductions of this character, it need be no matter for surprise that some grow tired—they always have done, ever since the world was created. Indeed, the wonder is their number is so few. Such names come up at every circuit meeting, and some worthy man is sent to stimulate the wavering individual.

Another cause of discipline is immorality. When one bears in mind the low condition of Chinese moral life, it is with deep thankfulenss that we can with all confidence assert that the moral character of our members is immeasurably superior to that of their neighbours. Out of two thousand members we are not called upon to exclude more than four or five per annum, a record which does not come far below that of our home churches. Nor is any laxity shown, for this is the one sin which our circuit meetings will not tolerate. On a definite charge of immorality being made against a member by his leader, or by any other member of the circuit meeting, the opinion of that meeting is easily ascertained. Suspension is the first step, wherever the case is not too flagrant to destroy hope of restoration. In repeated cases open dismissal is

adopted, the member's name being expunged from the registers, circuit and local; and in cases that have become notorious—an extremely rare event—a public notice is also posted, that all may know what is our attitude towards sin of this description.

Concubinage is very common amongst the Chinese. Mandarins and wealthy men often have a principal wife, and two, three, or four secondary wives. The rejection or admission of such persons, whether husband or wife, is a subject by no means free from difficulty. The woman is not a free agent; and as to the man, to compel him to put away his concubine would, in many cases, mean turning the mother of his children out of doors. Even where this is not the case, to ask him to make separate provision for her would not be wise, or in most cases possible. Some, especially amongst the lady missionaries, are strongly opposed to any such course, as grossly unjust to the woman. While we should not be opposed to the admission, after a prolonged probation, of an individual who in the days of his ignorance had entered into such an alliance, we set our faces rigidly against an actual member of the Church entering into any such state of bigamy. We have had but two cases of the kind.

The first happened twenty years ago. He was an elderly man, who had no son; and, being possessed of property, was anxious to have an heir of his own. The laws of China make the adoption of a son no easy matter, for in this land a man may not dispose of his property at will. Law and custom, in default of a son, dispose of his property to a nephew, or, to be accurate, to the nearest male relative of a succeeding generation in the same clan, who is not already senior heir-at-law to another; that is, not already engaged to offer sacrifice as eldest son to an immediate ancestor. Much litigation and many quarrels arise out of this unreasonable law. A man may not leave his property to a daughter, though he sometimes alienates part of it to her during his lifetime, this also often forming a subject of strife after his death. If a son be adopted, the father must obtain the sanction of his clan, or relatives, a deed must be signed, and the adopted son's name be admitted to the clan register. It is this law,

and the demands of ancestral worship, that are the two chief causes of concubinage in China.

So Mr Chu, having some property and no son, decided to marry a secondary wife. He was urgently besought not to do any such thing; the breach of Christian law was pointed out, as also the evils commonly attendant on this practice. In vain we argued with him, endeavouring also to point out that it mattered little what became of his property after he had done with it. Our arguments failed to move him from his purpose, and he took the woman. For the sake of the Church's well-being we were advised to suspend him from Communion, and did so. His future was not happy, for the woman made his life miserable; a lawsuit supervened, and the riches on which his heart and life were set melted away from his own into the pockets of yamen runners and others, nor did he long survive the lawsuit. Verily "he that saveth his life shall lose it."

The next case was five or six years ago. The man was a military graduate of the second degree, a person of much influence in his neighbourhood. He had amassed considerable wealth, and had three daughters, but no son. His nephews were wastrels, and it cut him to the heart that what had cost him so much toil to gather, should go to one of these, who would gamble it all away in a tenth of the time he had laboriously spent in collecting it. On becoming a Christian he had suffered serious loss of prestige, and had patiently borne the burden and heat of scorn and opposition for a number of years. Now, however, the pressure of this temptation came upon him, and there were enough and to spare of professional match-makers about, urging him to follow the usual course. Even his own wife added her persuasions to theirs.

At last he yielded, and an engagement was entered into. The news soon reached me, and I wrote him a kind and urgent letter, pointing out that such action was sin according to the law of Christ. Our beloved Pastor "Summer" took the letter, read aloud its contents, handed it over to him, and begged that he would obey God and do His will. Summer told afterwards how the M.A. sat for "at least two hours," with the letter in his hand, saying nothing, pale and troubled.

Late that night, after kneeling together, they each retired, but, in the small hours, Summer was aroused from his sleep by the M.A., who wished to say that he had thought the matter over, that he realised well enough it would be sin for him to take the woman, and that he had decided to give Summer full authority to put an end to the engagement, and lose the money already paid. Great was our thankfulness and rejoicing. Alas! before a year had passed, the pressure had again become too strong. He yielded, took a subsidiary wife, and while still attending Divine worship, he has lost all his old brightness and joy in Christ, and has become a paralysed soul. We still hope that some day he may be restored to spiritual health, but when true repentance has become impossible, full spiritual health is extremely difficult.

The preceding cases have been exhibited to show some of the temptations that fall to the lot of our native Christians. The wonder is not that a few fall away every year, but that any one of them stands firm. This is a *miracle* to some of us who live amongst them. Our Christians are far from perfect, but, pro rata to their surroundings, they are not behind their English brethren, and they are certainly far ahead of many of the Europeans who live in China. Many of them, —not all, by any means—love truth for conscience' sake; but subterfuge and deceit are so ingrained in the national character, that the story of Ananias and Sapphira presents fewer difficulties to some of us now than it formerly did, for malignant diseases demand drastic remedies, and fear of a lie must precede the love of truth. Suffice it, that our people are now conscious of the evil of lying, and are trying to order their lives on the principles of truth and righteousness.

VII

TYPES OF CONVERTS

"God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty."

A GENTLEMAN once asked, " From what class do your converts come ? Are they not all of the lowest grade, and do they not come for what they can get, in other words are they not 'rice Christians ' ? " That a few come for " what they can get " is true, and, as a consequence, seldom get it ; they sometimes get something better, and become Christians in spite of themselves.

As a matter of fact our people come from all classes, but the majority are small tenant or proprietary farmers, respectable men who have all their lives conducted themselves according to local ideas of decency and rectitude. These farmers are the backbone of China, and in them lies China's hope. Physically they are fine sturdy fellows, and mentally, morally and spiritually there are only ordinary human limitations to their ultimate development. In addition to these we have shopkeepers and artisans, builders and hawkers, scholars and gentry, and, needless to say, " we have the poor always with us," without whom, indeed, we should be ashamed.

That there was a time when the humble and ill-clad were our principal witnesses for Christ is a fact we proudly acknowledge, for is it not the crowning item of Christ's " Programme " that " the poor have the Gospel preached to them ! " And has not God chosen the foolish things and the weak to confound the wise and the mighty !

Not long since a septuagenarian lady, who justifiably prides herself on her cleanliness and neatness, and who became a Christian during the infancy of our Wenchow work, came to

have a chat with me. In the course of conversation she remarked, " We have improved much at the Zing-see (our City church) since I came first. Then, nearly all the Christians wore torn smocks and straw shoes ; nowadays it is quite a pleasure to meet so many nicely dressed people at the services." The change is certainly pleasanter from the æsthetic point of view, but whether it is matter of congratulation from the Christian standpoint is another question.

There is not much immediate likelihood of many noble and many wealthy joining our ranks, for to-day as in the days of our Lord, it is still hard for the rich man to enter into the higher life, the kingdom of the soul ; he is too firmly tied to earth, to his wealth, his comfort, his standing with his fellows. Discussing this matter once with a mandarin interested in Christianity, I pointed out that Jesus Christ taught that mere nobility of worldly position is unfit to rank with nobility of soul, and that though many of our Christians might be poor in this world's goods, yet—in a handsome public building the most important stones are the rough unhewn ones, buried in the foundations beneath the ground. So with our people: they are the strong, faithful foundation, upon which the glorious Temple of God is in course of erection ; the polished stones are also now arriving, and soon not only " strength " but " beauty " will be " in His tabernacle."

It is proposed in this chapter to give types of some of our men ; the women will be left till later. Most of our best Christians, however, call for no mention at all in this book, save that they are men who " live a godly, sober and righteous life, to the glory of God the Father." If " happy is the country whose annals are dull," then happy is the missionary whose churches consist of " dull " men of this type ; he will seldom see or hear them, for they stand not " in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen and heard of men." This type need not be further discussed ; it is found everywhere in all the world, and wherever it is located it is sturdy, unobtrusive, effective. There are, however, outstanding men in most churches in China, men who have a story, and of a few of these this chapter shall tell.

Ling Fuh Pah, in other words Uncle Ling Fuh, was a man whose double I knew and esteemed at home. Both were of

similar build, of similar facial appearance, of equal abruptness, sincerity and fervour, and both were market gardeners. Ling Fuh Pah in appearance, as in character, was quaint and unusual. Before his conversion he was literally a striking character, for his fists were ever ready for any one who wanted them, sometimes even for those who had no such desire. There he stands before me now, firm as an oak and just as gnarled and wrinkled, bandy legs, turned-in toes, shoulders broad and bowed, hands of horn and muscles of iron, a straggling moustache, and three scraggy sandy beards, one at each joint of his jaw, and a third on his chin—all he can grow, for the Chinese have but scanty beards—his jaw is square and resolute, his eyes red and small, and his skin has been ploughed into deep furrows by sixty years of torrid sun and wintry blast.

My first acquaintance with him was a few days after arriving in Wenchow, whither my esteemed superintendent, the Rev. F. Galpin, had brought me from Ningpo for induction into my new charge. One evening, just before leaving me to loneliness and fate, we were seated chatting together prior to evening prayers, when in came quietly and without knocking this old man. Standing by the door respectfully and shyly, he was soon invited to sit down and state his business. He accepted the first half of the invitation, but hesitated to tell his errand. Being pressed, he fell on his knees, began to pray in a whispering voice, and presently on arising, crept to the side of Mr Galpin's chair, and there in enigmatical terms began to ask him to remove the Ningpo preacher who, since Mr Exley, my predecessor's death, had been left in charge of the embryo Wenchow work.

Urged to give his reasons, he could only say that the preacher was suspected of misconduct, and that his influence for God was at an end here. Mr Galpin asked what I would suggest, and in my youthful distrust of mystery, and what seemed like sneaking, I hastily replied, " I should tell him to leave the room," which presently the old man did, without being told, whereupon Mr Galpin remarked, " Be thankful to have honest men who will tell you the truth. It is not so everywhere." Since then I have learnt the value of having men bold enough to face questions of this nature, in a spirit

of Christian charity. The immediate consequence of Ling Fuh Pah's courage was that the preacher was removed from Wenchow; and, in default of adequate evidence against him, given a fresh trial elsewhere.

Unable to read either Testament or hymn-book, Ling Fuh was dependent for all he learnt upon the spoken word, and he therefore never missed a service, Sunday or week-day. Whenever it was possible on week-day afternoons to leave his garden, he was always present at the Street chapel, and to it he brought all upon whomsoever he could lay his hands.

The next time Ling Fuh came under special notice was after the riot of 1884. His beloved meeting-place had been destroyed by a ruthless mob; its ruins were still smoking with the destroyers' fire; the hearts of his fellow-Christians were overwhelmed with sorrow; his own home was anything but a haven of rest, and danger lurked in every street. He had never heard of Wesley's hymns, or even of Wesley himself, but on this Monday morning he became fully qualified to enter into Charles Wesley's spirit when he wrote :—

"Surrounded by a host of foes,
Stormed by a host of foes within,
Nor swift to flee, nor strong to oppose,
Single against hell, earth, and sin,
Single, yet undismayed I am;
I dare believe in Jesu's name."

For no sooner had he arrived with his load of vegetables at his usual stand in Market Street, than he was set upon by a band of roughs. Being too well-known as a Christian to escape observation, his life was in instant jeopardy. His immediate destruction was proposed, and for a moment death and life trembled in the balance; but the calmness with which he pointed to a butcher's knife on a stall near by, and said, "There is the knife, and here is my old throat; the quicker you kill me the sooner I shall be in Heaven," disarmed his foes, and he was left to pursue his business, if not altogether in peace, at any rate in temporary safety.

Ling Fuh Pah once told me the story of his conversion. It was something like this :—

"I was a wild, reckless, foul-mouthed man, always spoiling

for a fight. If any one helped himself to my vegetables, it was woe to him when I caught him. But one day, as I was passing the Street chapel, I thought I would go in and hear what this 'foreign' preaching was about, so in I went, and stood amongst the people at the back. I hardly understood it all, but one phrase went to my heart, and I could not rid myself of it. The preacher said, 'It is sin to curse and swear.' Now I had not opened my mouth without blasphemy since I was a child, and, if it was a wicked thing to use such language, what a wicked old sinner I must be! This was the only thought I brought away with me, but it showed me how much in need of change I was, and proved the means of my salvation."

His conversion was a reality; no longer was he the Ling Fuh of yore, his lips were cleansed, his fierceness tamed, his passions brought under control. One day, he saw a man stealing from his garden. The man caught sight of him, and knowing only the old Ling Fuh, fled in terror; but the old man cried out, "Take it easy, take it easy, you'll fall and hurt yourself; take a few more." He overtook the would-be thief, who fell on his knees begging for mercy, but Ling Fuh lifted him up, and giving the astonished man the greens he had gathered, bade him take them away with him. The old man was also very fond of a pot of wine, but, finding that it made him pugnacious, he gave it up, a daily self-denial.

His universal greeting was "Höe-shie, höe-shie," "It is well, it is well." No matter whom he met it was always "Well," and his face shone and wreathed in smiles as he said it. Nothing would induce him ever to admit that the weather was bad. Were it a roasting day, it was still "höe-shie." Were it bitterly cold and wet, it was still "höe-shie." The King can do no wrong.

He had two fine grown-up sons, married, and with children of their own, all living under his roof. They were hard-working men, and filial sons. For the last ten years of his life they insisted on his giving up work, and living at ease, but this did not satisfy him. Gladly would he have worked in his garden to the end of his days, could he have seen them converted. With nothing to do, he spent much of his time in our kitchen, and many were the sighs and groans I listened to, and many the prayers he offered for their salvation. Before

his death he had the joy of seeing them give up idolatry, and occasionally come to service, but he never experienced the satisfaction of seeing them "soundly converted," "renewed in the spirit of their mind." Indeed, though they are in frequent attendance to-day, they have not yet been admitted to baptism, nor is there any present indication of that change without which baptism is a mere ceremony. His eldest grandson, however, who for many years shared his grandfather's bed, was a daily listener to his earnest prayers, and the object of his solicitude, has been a Christian from childhood, and is now house-physician at our hospital. The old man passed away at the ripe age of eighty, esteemed by all who knew him.

Of a different type was Mr Chang. I was passing his old house a few days ago, and if I did not take off my hat, the spirit was present to do so. At any rate I said aloud, "A saint lived there." It is no palace, nothing but a one-storeyed cottage, so low that a tall man must stoop to enter its door, so narrow that the few articles of furniture make it look crowded; and yet, in Mrs Chang's day, it was always much cleaner than the usual run of such houses, for she and her mother were careful and tidy, and Mr Chang himself was no lover of disorder. Dear old Chang! all three, wife, mother, and himself are now in heaven, and three young orphan daughters are left dependent on our charity.

When I first knew him he was a tall, lithe, good-looking man, approaching thirty years of age. He had the enthusiast's forehead, eyes of a frankness not general amongst the sons of Han, and, if size be a safe criterion, the mouth of an orator. His face, like his nature, was kind and benign, and through all his Christian life, despite much outspokenness, I never knew him make an enemy. He had been brought up to earn his living as a cutter of imitation paper money, that is, he trimmed the paper upon which lead foil had been beaten, and which afterwards was shaped into imitation silver ingots, for burning in idolatrous and ancestral worship. The Chinese believe that this paper money when burnt is transformed into real bullion in the other world, and it is certainly an inexpensive method of enriching one's ancestors.

It was Ling Fuh Pah who first induced Mr Chang to come

and hear the Gospel, and from his first hearing he was attracted by the magnetic truth of God and His salvation. His wife and mother-in-law, on hearing that he was attending our services, evinced the bitterest opposition, and for a long time poor Ling Fuh Pah hardly dare show his cheery face within their door. Nor can one blame them, for, in those days, to be a Christian was to incur much more odium than is incurred by a pronounced atheist in England, for when you have got rid of nine hundred and ninety-nine gods out of a thousand, the remaining one brings you very near to atheism.

A still greater trouble was soon to come upon them, for, when some time later Mr Chang applied for baptism, it became necessary to point out to him that his trade was an unfortunate barrier to this privilege. In his distress he was urged to take the matter to God, and seek divine aid in finding another means of livelihood. He prayed and prayed again for months, without obtaining the desired answer to his petitions. God, having much use for this man, willed to strengthen him for future service by letting him answer his own prayers.

Unable to wait any longer, and much to the chagrin of his family, he decided to give up his own lucrative occupation, and set up a small shop. This he accordingly did, and soon after was admitted to membership. The shop, however, soon came to the conclusion that it wanted a change of occupants, so it flatly refused to bring in a living wage to Mr Chang. Disappointed with such ingratitude, he decided to leave it to its fate. This time, again resisting the entreaties, peaceful and warlike, of his wife and her mother, to return to his old business, he got together a " pack," and set off to try and make a living as a bagman.

It was a weary life, involving much travel, much exposure to the elements, much chaffering, little profit, and few opportunities of meeting with God's people. At his own trade he could earn two to three hundred dollars a year, for he was a first-rate cutter. As a bagman his income never reached a higher rate than fifty. Let the man who receives an income of £5 a week ask himself how he would like to have it cut down to £1, with the £5 still within his reach on easy terms were he but willing to strain his conscience : such a

man may begin to realise what Mr Chang had to suffer for faithfulness to the truth he had espoused.

The time came, when having dismissed a servant, it became necessary for me to look around for another, and with some hesitation I called in Chang, told him the duties of the post, named the smallness of the salary, and offered him the berth. I scarcely expected him to accept, not only because of the small pay, but because of the menial duties involved. He, however, promptly closed with my offer, saying that financially he would be as well off as in his present business, but that what he valued more was the opportunity thus presented of regular attendance on the services, and time for study of the Scriptures.

It was while he was my servant that the riot of 1884 occurred, in which he again proved his loyalty to the Faith. We were met together on Saturday evening, October the fourth, 1884, for our usual prayer meeting. The times were times of anxiety. France was at war with China, and the French navy was not far away. Moreover, the Taotai had still further, though unintentionally, stirred up the feelings of the people, by exhorting every householder to get together a pile of stones at his door. These stones he had arranged to gather, and put into several Noah's arks which he was building, and the arks when full were in their turn to be towed to the mouth of the river, and sunk as barriers, on which the French should wreck themselves if they attempted an entry.

About this time a naval battle took place at Foochow, the next port south of us, and the Chinese fleet was completely destroyed. But a very different report was soon in the mouths of the Wenchow people, for, according to them, the Chinese fleet had swept the barbarians from the face of the waters. Well do I remember, only a day or two before the riot, a man in the main street of the city turning on me with well-affected surprise, and saying aloud, "What! are these barbarians *still* walking our streets?"

We met together on that memorable Saturday night; it was many nights before we assembled again. The scene is before my eyes as I write—the small chapel with its gloom-revealing oil-lamps, the handful of tired Christians, the

harsh-voiced preacher, the earnest prayers. Then, a speedy transformation: resounding blows on the gate, a howling mob, the crashing of stones and breaking of windows, a crowd of half-naked roughs in our native outhouses, a blazing lamp on the floor, the flight of the mob on my appearance, a vain appeal to them from the back door-step, the whirr of a large stone as it grazed the edge of my hat, the groan of a Christian behind me whom it struck on the head, our hasty and disheartened withdrawal; very soon the crashing of stones through the door of my room, the front street thronged with onlookers, mostly neighbours, who quietly make way for the youth who walks as calmly as he can through their midst. Next comes the yamen of the city magistrate, with its clerks and gatekeepers running out to bar the entry of the foreigner who would interview his worship; a hasty walk to the compound of the China Inland Mission, and a rapid return along with Mr Jackson; our admission and interview with the mandarin, to whom four different messengers had already been vainly sent; the donning of his robes of office and disappearance into his sedan chair as he goes, now too late, to the seat of trouble; the sky red with my blazing home, our attempt to sally forth to see to the safety of others, and the barrier of yamen underlings who now stop our exit as they had previously barred my entrance. Presently we are relieved by the arrival of Mr Stott and Dr Macgowan, who, thanks to Mr Stott's crutch, obtain an entrance; thrust into the closing gateway of the yamen just in the nick of time, it prevented their being bolted out, in which case they would have been at the mercy of the mob, which stoned them in their flight. Now follows the sleepless, anxious night in the magistrate's reception hall, the light of our burning houses making the sky lurid for hours. Meanwhile we listen to the hammering of every gong, drum and tin can in the city, for there is an eclipse of the moon, and whatever becomes of the foreigner, the "dog" must by every means be prevented from swallowing the queen of night.

We know not what has happened to our Christians. We know not what may yet happen to ourselves. Will the mob attack the yamen and drag us forth? Is the magistrate

able, or even willing, to protect us? The night is long, but it passes, the blessed daylight dawns at last, revealing our pallid faces, and bringing with it dear Chang.

"We have sought the city through for you," he says, as he falls on one knee at the side of my chair. "We did not know what had become of you, and when we were not searching we were praying for your safety. It is such a relief to see you, such a relief." And we, too, are equally glad to see him, for he is able to assure us of the safety of all our little band of Christians; and to tell us that, though every particle of foreign property in the city has been burnt, the rioters have not been able to cross the river to the British Consulate, and have now all dispersed.

The same day we four refugees were convoyed by several companies of soldiers across to the Consulate to approximate safety. And that same Sunday morning this brave man, along with Ling Fuh Pah, called all the Christians together, and, like Daniel at his window, openly held Divine Service in his own house; for his wife and her mother had already become converts. During the next three months, while it was deemed inadvisable for missionaries to dwell in the city, services were held Sunday by Sunday in Chang's house and yard, and to him was it due that our people maintained their faith and courage during those dark days.

Soon after this we had the misfortune to lose our colporteur. By profession a schoolmaster, he had come from his island home on a visit to the city. Happening to pass our street chapel, he entered, heard the new doctrine, and becoming interested, bought a New Testament. Months passed, and nothing more was seen of the young teacher; but one day he appeared again, a stranger to us but not to his Testament, every page of which he had carefully marked in red ink, indeed on some pages every verse. Later he was baptised, then appointed colporteur. Supported by the British and Foreign Bible Society, he went about selling Bibles, until the riot made it impossible, for the time being, to do so in and around Wenchow. He therefore decided to work his way overland to Ningpo, selling Scriptures as he passed through the county of Taichow, which lies between the two counties of Wenchow and Ningpo.

In due time he returned, but almost immediately fell ill with typhoid fever, and, despite our careful nursing, died. This was a sad blow, as we had been hoping that some day he would be an effective preacher, especially amongst the numerous and well-populated islands out at sea. Yet his influence was not lost, for his parents and sister became Christians; and to-day his sister's son, after some years' education in our College, is a preacher of recognised ability. Moreover, on his island, which is about as large as the Isle of Wight, we now have six churches.

The death of this colporteur opened a door of usefulness for Mr Chang. At that time he was our cook, a poor cook, but a good Christian—about as trying a combination as a mistress can have! Human nature reasonably resents a poor cook who is also a poor Christian, and alas! human nature can easily put up with a good cook who is a poor Christian, but it is tried indeed with a cook whose godliness is transparent everywhere but in his dishes! We felt, however, that Chang was too good a man to be spending his time in our kitchen. At the same time where to look for another cook we did not know, as there were no trained servants to be had here. After much consideration, at last I one day called him in, and addressing him by name, said:—

"You know that we are now without colporteur, and are desirous of appointing another. The wages are the same that you have as our servant, but the work is accompanied with considerable danger, and at least much insult will have to be borne. I wonder whether you would like the post."

The tears sprang instantly to his eyes as he replied:—

"Nothing would give me greater joy than to go round witnessing for the Saviour. It is the very thing I should like to do above all others, and I am ready to go even into the den of lions if need be."

We lost our cook, and got—a worse; but the Church obtained a worker of unsurpassed devotion and sincerity. A few months afterwards it became advisable to dismiss our borrowed preacher. He was harsh and overbearing in manner, and his theology was of the bitterest. To him there was no difficulty in consigning to endless torture all the ancestors of his auditors, good and bad alike, and this without

a pang in his heart, or a strain of sympathy in his voice. Chang's only education was that which he had acquired in the study of his Bible and hymn-book, but his intelligence, loyalty and energy, pointed him out as the one best suited to our needs. By degrees he slid into the late preacher's office, and never did we regret it, for it was with his aid that our country work was commenced and developed. Many were the preaching tours he and I took together, many the boats we shared, many the drenchings we endured, many the league we walked, and many the native meal that we with sharp appetite ate together.

One such tour, which we took together seventeen or eighteen years ago, I remember in particular. Four young men had been coming to the city services for some time, from the large village of Underbridge, now the head of our Outer Westbrook Circuit. It is fifteen miles up the river, and these young men were anxious to start a branch church in their village. Chang had been sent to reconnoitre, and having reported favourably, it was decided that I should also pay the place a visit. We hired a boat, set off one lovely autumn day, and in due course reached our destination. There we preached in the evening to a large and attentive crowd of farmers ; and, when the main body had dispersed, a number of the older people desired a further talk in the room upstairs. There we discussed our tenets until a very late hour, told them of our intention to open a station, and invited them to throw in their lot with us. Ultimately some of them did so ; and one man, who was present, a builder by trade, some time afterwards started another branch church in his village three miles further in, from which others have grown.

The leader of the four young men, who had received a fair education, and who is now pastor of a large circuit, was away from home, having gone to his father-in-law's, twelve miles off, in Inner Westbrook, for the harvest. Another member of the family, his aunt, a lady whom I have since learnt to highly esteem, was also away ten miles inland in the same direction. Knowing nothing at that time of the paramount importance of harvest time, of the labour involved, and of the weariness of the harvesters at night, but having an earnest desire to learn something of this district for evangelistic purposes, I

set off inland with Chang for companion. The journey was through a beautiful valley, which gradually narrowed into a forbidding ravine, the only way out of which was by a precipitous climb of a thousand feet over a mountain pass.

At last we reached our destination, a large village of three thousand inhabitants, and soon discovered the paternal home of the lady from Underbridge. Here, at her instigation, we were kindly received, and having announced our desire to speak to the people in the evening, soon found the house too small for the crowd which assembled. Some one kindly suggested that we should adjourn to an adjoining ancestral temple, and to it we repaired amidst a tumultuous throng. This temple at Küe-yie was the first of the kind I had ever been in, and there Chang and I held up the torch of truth to the best of our ability.

We were listened to with attention, and one man later joined the church, enduring much opposition in consequence. For a year or more his clansmen roughly turned him back if they found him going to service. In order to avoid his persecutors, he found it necessary to be up and on the road before daybreak on Sundays, and he was compelled to travel great distances in varying directions, in order to reach a place of worship. Nor dared he go to the same meeting two Sundays together, lest he should be caught and ill-treated on the way.

In this village the roughs once attempted to throw my wife into the stream, on which occasion our safety was for a time seriously imperilled. Many are the miles that I have wandered out of my way to avoid the insults and threats which in those days ever awaited me here. For years, whenever I visited this neighbourhood, the hills echoed and re-echoed with the cry, "Kill the barbarian," "Slaughter the foreign thief," "Beat the foreign dog." It would not have been difficult to have had some of these ill-disposed men punished by the officials, but the missionary who himself cannot bear affront, must find it hard to preach forbearance to his people, and he needs constantly to bear in mind the words of his Lord, "What do ye *more* than others?"

Morning brought with it heavy rain and a cold wind, so our projected visit to Plum Torrent, a village further in, seemed for the time being doomed. With much reluctance I gave the

OUR MISSION BOAT

word for our homeward march, but towards afternoon the rain fell less persistently, so my order was countermanded, and we set off along the wet, slippery roads, uncertain what sort of welcome we should meet.

In due course we reached Plum Torrent, where the houses, built one above another on the steep hill-side, look as if the front door of one opened on to the roof of the next below. We were wet, cold, and miserable, nor did our reception dry our skins, nor charm away our misery. Long did we sit on the dreary verandah before that simplest of Chinese welcomes was offered, a cup of tea, made as the Chinese make it. And how refreshing it was when it did come, for the Chinese make tea, not as a dye, but for its delicate fragrance, just half a dozen leaves in the bottom of the cup—the leaves sun-dried, not roasted black as is done for the foreign market—boiling water poured on, and the saucer put upside down, inside the top of the cup, to make it " draw." The tea came at last, but with it no invitation to prolong our stay, and dusk was rapidly drawing on. Everybody was occupied with the harvest, and apparently had no interest in the foreigner, which was somewhat singular as no foreigner had ever set foot in this neighbourhood before.

Things were looking almost as cheerless as they well could look, when Mr Chang made them look even worse by commencing to shiver from head to foot. Soon he was shaking as if palsied, his teeth chattering noisily in his head, and his face turning yellow as parchment ; the sudden change in weather had induced an attack of ague. About this time the Christian son-in-law from Underbridge came to us in a half-ashamed sort of fashion. It was evident from his manner, that his own lapse to Christianity had not raised him in the esteem of his relatives, and that he had been enduring much. By his influence Mr Chang was taken off to bed, and covered up with wadded quilts. I was invited to join the family meal, and, as we all thawed towards each other, ventured to propose that, during the evening, I should be allowed to explain our teaching to the villagers in the ancestral temple. Some of them seemed to think it would at any rate be a diversion, so by and by we set out for the temple which was at the foot of the village.

Just as we started, out came Chang, burning with fever, but insistent on accompanying us to the preaching. Not only did he come, but took part also, and though the inclement weather kept away all but a score or two of people, such a good time had we that within a few weeks we were able to establish an embryo church there. The "father-in-law," with whom we were staying, a gentle, retiring scholar, who had obtained the coveted B.A. degree, was present at our meeting, as also was his elder brother, likewise a B.A., and a man of greater force of character. On our return to the house we had become so friendly, that these two and their friends plied me with questions till midnight, few of which concerned the message I was specially desirous of impressing on their minds. Years after I heard the elder B.A. publicly tell of his conversion :—

"When I heard the Gospel preached in our temple," he said, "I was convinced of its truth, but not yet converted by it. On reaching home I kept on asking Mr Soo all sorts of questions on general topics, but he invariably worked them round to Christianity, which at that time I was wishful to avoid. Afterwards, when services were started in our village, I used to attend them, but, though by this time thoroughly convinced of the Truth and its value, I carefully avoided taking off my hat or kneeling with the rest, but wandered about during the service, ostentatiously smoking my pipe. About this time, the Literary Chancelior was due to arrive from the Provincial Capital, to examine the students for degrees, and as there would be thousands of scholars in the city I thought I would go down and see some of my old friends. Mr Soo had thrown open the outbuildings of the City church for the use of certain students, and I found room amongst them.

"One Wednesday evening, at a service I attended, he took as his text, 'Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel.' He described a variety of bushels, such as the bushel of covetousness, the bushel of evil desire, and others, but it was the bushel of pride and false shame that interested me most. That went home to my heart, for it was the pride he described that had kept my hat on during this very service, as it was also this pride that had kept me

seated at the opening prayer when everybody knelt. That night Mr Soo took the bushel off my lamp, for at the closing prayer I no longer resisted, but knelt for the first time in my life with Christian people."

This capable scholar soon afterwards wrote a treatise on Christianity, which he distributed amongst his literary friends, from whom for a long period he had to endure both ostracism and vituperation. His treatise, and other books distributed by him, helped towards the enlightenment of many of the local literati, and to-day no man in that neighbourhood need feel shame at being a Christian. For a time also, he went out as a local preacher, a very self-denying ordinance indeed. Unfortunately his vocal gifts did not equal those of his mind, for his voice seldom reached beyond the third row of hearers; hence, when the supply of local preachers had overtaken the demand in his neighbourhood, he quietly retired from the trying office.

To return to Mr Chang, however, four or five years later his zeal resulted in an illness, which ultimately cost him his life. He had been visiting the newly formed churches in Seechee, evangelising where opportunity presented, and was on his way home. Reaching the river in the evening, tired to the point of exhaustion, he found no boat to bring him the remaining twenty miles to the city. Presently, seeing a water-barge crawling its tardy way citywards, where the drought had dried up the wells, he begged a passage, but the only place the boatman could give him was the narrow thwart where stands the mast. A tired Chinaman has the knack of sleeping anywhere; on a six-inch bench; on the parapet of a bridge: or, like Jacob, on the bare ground, with a stone for a pillow. So Chang had no difficulty in falling asleep on this thwart, narrow though it was. Soon, alas! the boat gave a jerk, and poor Chang awoke to find himself head over ears in the cargo of water.

He was, of course, drenched through and through, so also was the change of clothes he always carried in the double-ended purse-bag, which the travelling Chinaman slings over his shoulder. For hours he had no choice but to sit in his sodden clothes, facing the chilly night wind. Inflammation of the lungs followed, consumption supervened,

and though he lived more than ten years longer, he was never again able, despite several attempts, to go about doing the work he loved.

Nevertheless, in his retirement, and until within a few months of his death, he remained a tower of strength to the work. No candidate for baptism in the city was accepted without his recommendation, many disputes that might have grown to troublesome magnitude, were quietly settled by him, and many a dark matter was elucidated by his knowledge and judgment. His little house was the rendezvous of all who needed advice, sympathy, or encouragement, and though humble the building, and unlettered the man, even those who deemed themselves his superiors in this world, did not disdain to visit him and seek his aid.

Yet his enforced retirement was a great loss to us, for though other and abler preachers arose, his was the devotion and faithfulness that was always ready for the laborious post or the forlorn hope. "Here I am, send me," describes the man. No matter what the difficulty, or how distasteful the task, he was aye ready. When, for instance, the people of Cragg Head attacked our newly formed church there, destroyed our furniture, and beat the Christians, leaving one for dead on the spot, and when there was none who dare go to gather the scattered flock together again, it was Chang who came forward, and said, "Let me go." He went, and, by his fearlessness, encouraged the handful of "enquirers" to meet again, saying, "Don't fear; whoever hurts you, must first lay me low." Our fine work in Nanchee owes its existence to his firmness, amiability, and faith.

Of the trading classes we have as yet not very many. The Sabbath is one of their initial difficulties. A man who keeps a shop, especially if he has a number of employees, finds it almost impossible to make his business pay, if he keeps idle for a seventh of its time a staff, which, all the same, has to be paid and fed. Not only so, but whoever closes his shop between the middle of the Chinese January and the middle of their December is supposed thereby to proclaim his bankruptcy; he has "put up his shutters," and his creditors may come and carry off his goods. Some of our Christian tradesmen risk the consequences (which are more

serious in theory than in practice), and close their shops on Sunday. These are the men who, in the coming years, will influence the trading classes of Wenchow in this direction, just as Mission Colleges in China have already influenced the modern native schools and colleges to close on that day, and as the Consular Service, and also the Maritime Customs, controlled by Sir Robert Hart, will also, by their example in Sabbath observance, not be without effect on the official life of the Empire.

One such tradesman resides close at our door. He is the keeper of a grain shop, which is faithfully closed on the Lord's Day. When Ah Nyang Pah first came amongst us, it was not love of God, but fear of evil spirits that brought him. He then attracted my notice chiefly by his lack-lustre eyes, and his own and his family's general untidiness. To-day, so far as the city church is concerned, he takes the place of Mr Chang. No longer unbearably untidy, and with faithful, bright, dark-brown eyes, he fills the office of Leader circumspectly and well. This weak-looking devil-scared man has become fearless and determined to a remarkable degree. He can say "No" to a designing person most effectively; he is the best collector of funds we have ever had; his judgment in passing candidates for baptism is reliable, as also is his discretion in the various difficulties which are of so frequent occurrence in a large church. With his own small means he is most liberal, and the amount of time he gives to the work without a penny of remuneration is incredible. Nevertheless his business prospers, and he is bringing up his children respectably, in the "fear and admonition of the Lord." A few years ago his twelve year old son, a boy whose temper is very different from his parent's, was reported to have beaten his father, the father submitting rather than make trouble. Fortunately the matter came to our head schoolmaster's ears, and roused him to anger. "What!" said he, "been beating his father! Why, if he is allowed to do that, he will be beating his schoolmaster next. Fetch him along. He won't come? We'll see about that." And away this disciplinarian went in person, brought the youth by his tail to the schoolroom, and there put a speedy end to any more father-beating!

Others of the trading class we have, but few see their way to close on Sundays, contenting themselves with merely attending the services. "The time of figs is not yet." Of the thousands of shops that face us in this city, scarcely a percentage is closed on the Sabbath, and it is to be feared that the majority of the occupants know little of the Christian Religion. This is one of the most depressing sides of our work, and seems to call for special methods of treatment. Whether there be any such, other than that of allowing the truth to gradually make its own way, has not yet been borne in upon us. When it comes we shall hail it with joy.

Of the official classes we have in Wenchow, scarcely any who are Christians; none but a few petty military officers. Civil mandarins are barred from joining us, even if they had the wish, by the idolatrous observances which form part of their official duty. This class, as ever, will be the last to be freed from its restrictions and to participate in the privileges of the Gospel. The Christian Literature Society is doing a great work in enlightening them, and already mandarins high in office have begun to take an interest in our Faith.

Of the beggar class we have not as many as we ought to have. There are a few, but a convert does not long care to remain a beggar. We have some, the old and the blind, whom we cannot yet hope to see entirely freed from their calling. Something is done for them, for our people are kind to their poor, but in China there are practically no poor-houses or almshouses like those in England. In every city there is a head of the beggars, who has some sort of control over his fellows, but his office does not carry with it power to provide for them anything beyond a lodging on the bare ground. Poor creatures! they are a sad sight, the maimed dragging themselves painfully on their haunches, the blind helplessly feeling their tardy way with a long bamboo, or stumbling along the road in a string of half a dozen, the palsied shaking their miserable bodies and making distressing grimaces as they beg an alms from the passer-by, the leprous exposing their pitiful sores, the widows pointing to their infant children, the imbecile gibbering and pointing to his mouth, and the sturdy beggar shouting his demands for cash to the unheeding shop-

keeper. What can we do for them ? Yet, even Christ did not heal all the diseased in Judea, nor feed all the hungry. He brought a power that would ultimately do so, and this power we, too, are bringing to this land.

A beggar was the means of initiating our work in Kuchee. To save our credit we set him up later in a small trade, but though the church there flourishes, his violent temper long ago drove him to the devil. Another beggar, an old man, in the same district, always brings his mite to the Communion Service. He, like many other country mendicants, only begs during half the year, cultivating his potatoes during the rest of the time. The mother-in-law of our best Biblewoman, a devoted little worker, was a beggar, but soon after the family joined us the son, an unobtrusive fellow, obtained work at a silk-spinner's, and induced his old mother to give up the " profession."

In this chapter, then, there have been introduced members of the four classes into which the Chinese divide their Society, gentry, farmers, artizans, and traders. Even the unclassed beggar has not been overlooked. With thousands of Christians to choose from, it is a temptation to unduly prolong this description, but the time has come for it to be brought to a close. We refrain from telling the story of Mr Dzang, the ex-treasurer of the General's Yamen, who, before becoming a Christian, smashed to pieces some of the gods in a public shrine ; they had told him his sick son would get better, and had the audacity to repeat their prophecy when he went, with black anger in his heart, after his son had died. We refrain from giving the story of another Mr Dzang, whose village lies within sight at my feet, whose name, and his father's before him, was the best known for integrity and uprightness on the north bank of the river, and who is just recovering, in our hospital, from a serious operation cheerfully undergone. Or, of the naval petty officer, who had been a vegetarian and devotee of the goddess of mercy for twenty years, and who, after becoming a Christian, one dark night, fell from his ship into the swift river, and, just before sinking for the last time, had his prayer answered by being picked up by a passing boat. Or, of Mr Shao, B.A., the wealthiest man in his neighbourhood, who was the first Christian in his village, and who has just

given a liberal contribution to a new church. Or, of my writer, whose father, the ablest doctor and scholar in his village, and for miles around, threatened his son with death if he became a Christian, and who had to await his father's death before daring to join us. Or, of the many others, the life story of each of whom would fill a chapter ; men who have proved their faith by their sufferings, who have been tortured " not accepting deliverance," who have " had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments " ; who have been " stoned, tempted, slain with the sword," " of whom their world was not worthy," but who have a share in the " better thing " which God has provided for them and for us.

VIII

NATIVE SERMONS

"The foolishness of preaching."

It has been said that Christianity exists in spite of its pulpits ; indeed certain of the cynical are prepared to advance this as one of the stoutest "evidences of Christianity!" Nevertheless, Christianity is so intertwined with its pulpit that, apart therefrom, it either ceases to exist, or, if existent, is paralysed and moribund. Without it Christianity would never have been propagated ; for, whether the pulpit be of costly, many-coloured marbles, erected in some gorgeous fane, or whether it be an old Chinese dinner-table, many-coloured with much and varied use, and set up under roof of thatch or glorious canopy of heaven, everywhere, in every clime, it is and always has been a "power of God for salvation." Therefore let no man slight the Christian pulpit, for by so doing he ungratefully slights the instrument with which the Church has dug him, and all his privileges out of the adamantine rock of paganism, barbarism, and vice.

In China, apart from the newly instituted pulpit, no public speaking exists. Hitherto there has been no scope for rhetoric or the orator. It is true there are actors and story-tellers who have their own special field of loquacity ; but followers of those professions hardly come under the category of public speakers. Until the pulpit was set up, there was in China no such thing as a formal speech, a lecture, or a sermon. There is no House of Parliament, no political meeting, no desk save that of the pedagogue, no "bar" before which to practise, no rostrum but that erected in the street for the blind minstrel or story-teller ; yet the Chinaman is a born speaker, being by nature even better endowed with the orator's gift than his English cousin. Moreover, his flowing robe and his fan,—

especially the fan—are distinct adjuncts to his powers of expression. No Englishman, even in flowing skirts, can use a fan in his public addresses with the grace and effect that is possible to the native, any more than he can hide his foreign features beneath a Chinese skull cap, or his European stride behind a native petticoat. For ages, then, this disturbing gift of oratory has lain dormant ; Christianity is now arousing it, for some evil and for much good, but Ormuzd will overcome Ahriman in this as in other branches of experience.

Just think of a vast nation that until modern times has never heard a sermon in the whole course of its history ; that has existed, developed and to a certain extent thriven through long ages without discourses, lectures, or public speeches ! A gentleman at home once asked me what I considered to be the cause of the arrested development of this people. May it not largely be due to the absence of these goads to advancement ?

The earliest native sermons that I listened to with understanding, was delivered by the half-paralysed native preacher who accompanied me on my first evangelistic trip. I heard that sermon many times afterwards, fitted by him to quite a variety of texts, and it is probable that the frequent repetition, whatever somnolent effect it may have had on others, was not without influence in advancing my own acquisition of the language.

One of the strong points of this sermon was the appeal to his own paralysis, which he had owned, or which had owned him, from his birth. Without this affliction what would his life and sermons have been ! He seemed to revel in it, it was his sole patrimony, his real and personal estate, and when he reached that part of the address in which his paralysis was introduced, his eyes fairly gleamed and goggled with pride and gratification. Many are the texts he has made luminous with his poor, useless side, so that to shower pity on him were a shameful waste, unless, indeed, it took the form of a dollar or two to ease him of his small debts, when they had ceased to be a comfort to him.

One of the principal illustrations he drew from his affliction was something like this : " They say that the foreigners are plotting against the Son of Heaven (the Emperor), and aiming to seize our country ! Just look at me, now look at me, and

you will see the folly of these rumours. If the foreigners had any such idea, would they not be scouring the country in search of the lusty and the strong, instead of such useless creatures as myself? Of what possible good can half a man like me be to them? Could I fight with a hand like this? Could I run with a leg like this? Look at me, and ask yourselves whether the foreigners, if they had such an intention, would not be fools to employ cripples like me, or blind men like Tsang-pah there, or old fellows like Sang-pah, or these feeble old women over here;" and so on. Poor old Tsiu! He still preaches in the hospital occasionally, where the audience is too fluctuating to become weary of his repetitions, though one wonders at times whether it is wise to keep such an incurable as a hospital signboard. At least he is an indication of what the hospital cannot do!

We have grown since the days of Mr Tsiu, and now there is much variety of style, and sometimes even considerable ability shown by our native preachers. One favourite method is the allegorical. A subject is taken, and the detail of the text descanted upon, even strained, sometimes well-nigh to breaking-point. The following is an instance of this allegorical style.

The preacher is a master bricklayer, to whose honesty our Mission owes a great debt of gratitude, though he always looked on himself as the debtor, because of the eternal life it had brought to him, and which he has just gone more fully to enjoy. His sermon is on the turning of water into wine, and his text the second chapter of St John's Gospel. The marriage, of course, typifies the "Marriage of the Lamb," the Bride is the Church, the Bridegroom the Lord our Saviour. The lack of wine is a lack of the Holy Spirit, and consequent lack of joy. Filial piety and obedience are taught by our Lord's obedience to His mother's wishes; poor man, this was a tender point with him, for his own son was a wild and wicked scapegrace, who "brought down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

"And there were set six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece." "What means the water here? Does any of you know?" he asks. "The Holy Spirit," cries one. "No!

The wine stands for that, as I have already told you," is the reply. " Baptism," says another. " The Lord's Supper," cries a third. Finally, some thoughtful man or woman gratifies the old preacher by answering, " The Doctrine." " To be sure," is his comment. " And what did they use the water for ? Does none of you know ? Why ! for purifying purposes. They seem to have been a good deal cleaner than we Chinese are. Six waterpots holding two or three buckets apiece, that's a good lot more than any one hereabouts uses for cleansing purposes, unless it be the foreigners who wash themselves all over once or twice a day ! And so it is with the truth of God ; it is given to us for our inward cleansing, and, until it came, we were filthy and impure."

" But what about the *six* waterpots ? How is it there are six, and not five or four, eight or ten ? Can any of you tell me ? " No answer comes, though the audience is evidently busy scratching its head. " Surely, the six means the six days of the week, " he tells them at last," the six working days. You all as a matter of course try to purify yourselves on Sundays, but what about the six days of the week ? What about the six days ? Here you are taught that you are not only to be clean on Sunday, but on the other six days also. You are not only to pray and sing and read your Bibles on Sundays, but every day of the week, and, just as it says here, two or three bucketsful, so you must get your two or three bucketsful every day, morning, noon, and night."

In like manner he shows them that though Christians must obey the Lord's command, and fill themselves with the doctrine, the Water of Life, yet they may fill, and fill in vain, unless they look to Him for the " Word " which changes the water, the knowledge, into wine, the power of the Holy Spirit. Nay, unless He has changed the water into wine we may " draw," and draw as long as we like, but no one will be the gladder for it. When, however, He, who alone possesses this power, has turned the water into the wine of the Holy Spirit, we may draw and bear it to the guests, in full confidence that they will say the best has been kept till last.

It is many years since I neard this sermon, one evening in our little meeting-room. No note other than mental was made of it, but the above is the gist of what he said, and,

needless to say, close attention was paid to good old " Ah Yao Pah " by his audience.

Another sermon, elaborated from one of my own, travelled a long way. It was on the Lamp, which was likened to the Christian. Some lamps are very beautiful outside, yet give but a poor light ; just as some Christians are well-to-do, well-educated and externally prepossessing, yet shew little Christian light in their homes and surroundings. Others, there are with no beauty of exterior, but their light is so bright that all rejoice in it. The oil is the Gospel ; the double wick is our heartfelt love to God, and to our fellow-men ; the light that lights it, is God's Holy Spirit ; the chimney that draws the flame to brightness is prayer ; the lamp-shade is wisdom and discretion, for as a bare light hurts the eye, so indiscretion in the believer may hinder a man's acceptance of the Light of the Gospel ; the light of the lamp is, of course, the life and conduct of the Christian. Other details are added by one and another, as, for instance, that Christianity, like the oil (generally known as " foreign oil "), is brought from far away beyond the seas ; that the heart like the lamp needs daily cleansing and refilling ; that the extinguisher means death, which may come suddenly or slowly, but which teaches us to let our light shine while we may ; and so on.

A couple of centuries ago, before we as a nation had become as refined as at present, the English pulpit indulged in a breadth of expression that to-day would not be tolerated. The pulpit in China is now in that mediæval state, for while there are subjects on which a preacher must speak guardedly, yet there is occasionally, still sufficient latitude to shock an English audience. For instance—no, after all, that shall be omitted. But I remember once hearing a silversmith, a local preacher, describe most graphically the meaning of true repentance. He said, " It is just like a man who has been to a feast." He has had a real high time, and eaten liberally of every dish—of which the preacher gave such an appetising description, that you could almost see his audience stretching out their hands for the chopsticks. He has also indulged freely in rice wine, and now wends his way homewards with shining face and swaggering gait. Alas ! penitence deep, violent, and movingly described o'ertakes him, and—repent-

ance was most realistically depicted. The preacher had even worse to follow, when following the precedent of King Solomon and St Peter, he so vividly portrayed backsliding that his audience groaned with him in disgust! Repentance and backsliding were, at any rate, painted in effective colours, which made a more vivid impression on his congregation than the toneless pigments of " proper " souls could have produced.

Of a much higher order was a sermon I heard a few weeks ago, delivered by Mr Tsih, B.A., to a mixed audience of believers and unbelievers. He was unveiling the folly of idolatry, and calling upon his hearers neither to worship nor to fear these gods of wood and clay. After urging them, in telling tones, that their gods were deaf, blind, dead, he turned on his audience and said, " But you don't believe me, eh ? Very good, then, let me tell you something you will perhaps be ready to believe." Rising into the prophetic vein, the first time I have ever seen it in a Chinese, and stretching his tall frame, he began in graphic manner :—

" I was standing on a certain hill, a great hill, all of clay, of yellow clay. As I stood there, wondering at this vast mountain of clay, I was amazed to notice far away up towards its summit, a lump begin to bulge out and to swell. As I watched, it grew and grew, until I was impelled to approach nearer in order to see this wondrous sight. Of itself it rose higher and higher, until from each side projections began to stretch outwards, and by and by a sphere arose on the very top, and soon afterwards the lowermost portion divided in twain. Then as I stood there, all in amaze, the thing which the mountain of clay conceived and brought forth took human form, and I saw that the parts divided in twain became legs, and the two outstretching pieces became arms, and the sphere above took shape as a head, and lo! the mountain of clay had begotten a god—the mountain had of itself begotten a god! "

He looked into the faces of his puzzled hearers as if searching them, then added, " And you still don't believe me ? What then can I tell you that you will believe ? I tell you that your clay gods are dead, and you don't believe. I tell you that they are alive and can reproduce their species, and you won't believe. What can I tell you that you will believe ? " From this he went on to tell them of the God, who

is not clay but Spirit, from whom all the souls of men have had their being.

A few days after, at an open meeting, in connection with a Scripture class for local preachers which I was holding, he was called upon for a short impromptu address. Taking up the chief idea which had run through the addresses of the preceding speakers, he proceeded dramatically to describe the attitude of God towards those who seek His forgiveness. The text was, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

"There you kneel," said he, "before the throne of God, pleading for the forgiveness of your multitudinous sins. See, the Father pities you! He is on the point of blotting out your transgressions! He is deciding to expunge all your vast debt! Behold! He opens the book before Him; He takes up His kingly plume; He waves it in the air; a moment more and all your debt will be cancelled. But—Wait a moment, He says, what is that little matter this penitent had against So-and-So? Has he forgiven him yet? If not, is he willing to do it now? Are you willing? He demands of you. Will you forgive that man the trifling thing you have against him? No, Lord, I can't; I want you to forgive me, but I cannot let him off. Down goes the vermilion pencil, and your debt remains. The Lord says, We will see what sort of a man this is who seeks our compassion. He sees that you want all and will give nothing. Away with you! Away with you! If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." The dramatic energy of Mr Tsih always keeps his audiences expectant, no yawning chasms in the faces of the people ever front him, nor any eyes closed in deepest thought, save his own, which sometimes he keeps closed through most of his discourse.

Last Sunday, in our City church, the preacher made quite a sensation in the middle of his sermon, by introducing a much battered idol to his audience, an introduction that caused a ripple of laughter to run through the building. He told them that Mr Sharman had requested him to find an idol to be sent home in a box of curios the Committee has asked for; that he had searched in Christian homes throughout the whole of his circuit of twenty churches for a specimen to

give to Mr Sharman, and this battered idol was the only one he had been able to find. He further explained the reason of its being in such bad condition—the children of the family had been allowed to use it as a plaything !

A few weeks ago, a local preacher, at an evening meeting in connection with our Scripture class, gave one of the best sermons there delivered. His subject was, " Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Although he had only been a preacher for a few months, he shewed a deep insight into the teaching of his text. Amongst other things he pointed out that just as a child, barricaded in by its mother, will, if at all possible, find a way to creep out, so in like manner it ignores human barriers and distinctions, and will as readily approach a man in poor raiment as a man well-dressed, an unread man as a learned man. So with the Christian who has the child-heart ; human conventions, when barring from God's liberty, are barriers to be broken down. There were many other good points in his address, which I regret not to have noted. His sermon, however, coupled with his good character and business intelligence, have decided his fate, and he is now invited to become an evangelist.

The New Testament is our preachers' text-book. Practically all of them possess a copy of the Old, which is kept for reference, as its bulk renders it inconvenient for carrying about ; moreover very few of the people are sufficiently advanced to read and understand it, but let not the reader infer that our preachers and people are altogether ignorant of it and its teaching. There are so many allusions to it in the New Testament, that the preachers find frequent opportunity for illustrating their sermons from its incidents and precepts, Both preachers and people very much appreciate its stories, with most of which they are fairly well acquainted. I remember once a sense of embarrassment coming over me, as one of our preachers catechised his flock on the plagues of Egypt, and gradually approached me. To my relief the plagues were ended before they reached the place where I was sitting.

After prayers the other morning, a question was put to me by a local preacher in regard to Moses and Elias at Our

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Lord's Transfiguration: "How did the disciples recognise them to be Moses and Elias?" he asked. I, too, will ask my reader what answer he would have given.

Sermon preparation naturally comes much more easily to some than to others. There are men with the gift of extracting gold from what to others is a common stone. So is it with some of our preachers; even amongst the uneducated there are those who have the spiritual intuition. Most of our pastors, however, and a number of the local preachers have had a fair education, and having been brought up on the "Essay" system, which until lately formed the principal subject at the national examinations, know something of the value of homiletics, and soon learn to analyse a subject and divide a text. Hence in this, as well as in other ways, the Confucian School has been making straight the path of the Christian preacher.

Our late native pastor, Mr "Summer," was a preacher of more than average intellectual ability, and of much insight. He once preached a very fine sermon on, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." His object was to show that the religions of China had been preparing, even though imperfectly, the way of the Lord, who came not to destroy Confucius, or Laocius, or Buddha, but to perfect their imperfections and complete their incompleteness. He preached also a powerful sermon on, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." This sermon he later embodied in a tract, which he published at his own expense, and distributed among his friends as a sort of "Apologia." It was, alas! the last piece of writing he was ever permitted to publish.

Our preachers also lay hold of the topics of the times for their addresses. Arriving late at a country station one Sunday, after travelling all night in inclement weather, I found a local preacher on his feet addressing the congregation. There had been recent trouble over salt smuggling, as the salt taotai had withdrawn the privilege of the harvesters to each bring home from the coast, free of duty, a shoulder load of that precious commodity, in lieu of wages. The whole district was in a ferment, and there was fear of our people involving themselves in the general trouble. This young

preacher had to-day taken as his text the words of our Lord, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," and was treating the subject in a very Christian and therefore pacifying spirit. I almost regretted having arrived so soon, but found opportunity of supporting and supplementing his remarks.

While writing this chapter a pastor, who never had advantages of education, but who proved his faithfulness a few years ago by suffering nearly unto death, and who has since proved his intelligence by capable administration of the affairs of a difficult circuit, has sent me, romanised, the gist of a sermon he recently delivered. It is the first of the kind I have ever received, and after revision it will appear in our newly established local romanised monthly. His text is St Matt. vii. 13, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Speaking of the bottomless pit, a subject on which he harbours no doubts, he says :—

"The place of destruction knows only death and not life, only entrance without exit, only darkness without light, and is a place of great distress. Who are they that go to this place of sorrow? All who on earth live evil lives, thieves, adulterers, idolaters, the covetous and the unrepentant; these when they die must go to this place of destruction. You will not believe this bare statement, so let me give an illustration to show whether this is a fact or not. If I am wrong, I beg you, respected fathers and brethren, to point out the error to me, your younger brother.

"While stationed at Rainbow Bridge, in the Clear Music Circuit, last year, I went in the eleventh month to the church at Terrace Hill. The trees on the mountain side are very numerous and large, and many monkeys dwell in them. During my visit, I there met five Hupeh men, who made their living by hunting wild animals. On hearing that there are many monkeys on this mountain, they were very desirous of catching them. But monkeys are the cleverest of all wild animals, and exceedingly difficult to capture; hence they had to use their best skill in laying a snare for them.

"To this end they made five large traps and covered them with branches. Then they brought things that monkeys like

to eat, and scattered them round about for a distance, but always towards the pit. Over the traps they put a larger supply. Now, monkeys are greedy creatures, so, seeing good things to eat strewn in their path, they were naturally delighted, and forthwith commenced to feed. Nevertheless, while they ate, they were very wary, lest they should be caught and killed. For some days they came along this way eating, and conceived a great liking for the food that was scattered for them.

"By and by they followed up the food as far as the place where the five traps were buried, and, seeing a fine supply of good things, pounced greedily upon the food laid on the branches which covered the pit, expecting to fill themselves with the good things. Instead of that, the branches gave way, and the animals fell into the traps. The monkey-catchers, lying in ambush near, on hearing the monkeys fall, at once came out, caught the prisoners, killed them, skinned them, ate their flesh, made glue of their bones, and a profit out of their destruction.

"Fathers and elder brethren! I beg you not to look lightly on this story. Unless one be wary here on earth, it is easy to be led by men into their traps, and, so to speak, to be skinned by them even as these monkeys were. It seems to me that there are five great traps laid for men. One of them is the monastery and nunnery, which are opened to lead men and women to become monks and nuns. They spread them fair before you — gilt idols, chanting, incense, rest, and quiet. But no sooner do you fall into their hands than they skin off your proper clothing, shave the last hair off your head, even burn nine holes into your crown, rob you of all your patrimony, and, once caught in their toils, it is exceedingly difficult to escape. Another trap is litigation and the lawyer's house. (Men are forbidden to act as lawyers in China.) Here, instead of learning to forgive your enemies and to avoid quarrels with your fellow-men, you are incited to spend time, money, and strength to the destruction of your financial and spiritual prosperity, while the lawyer and the yamen people fleece you for their own gratification. The third trap is the "street of flowers and the lane of willows," where the temptress lays her snare. There is seen the house of the strange woman,

powdered and bedecked for the destruction of the fool, who sells his very garments to gratify his passion. The fourth trap is the gambling-shop, found in multitudes both in town and country. As the monkeys went to their destruction in bands, so these misguided people gather together in crowds, and very soon everything goes, their very clothes being skinned from their backs to satisfy their greed. The fifth trap is the opium den, and a big one it is. He who has money can buy till all his funds are gone, then off comes his skin, and in rags he ends his days. These five traps may be likened to the destruction which awaits those who refuse to repent and be converted.

"Do you think there is any way of escape for such sinners? It is a joy to know that our Saviour Lord has come to save us out of destruction, and to lead us back into the right way. Man has been led by man to destruction. Jesus, our Saviour Lord, leads us out of the snare of death into the snare of life. For the Saviour Lord has also five traps, laid in the five continents. But these are traps of life and not of death; and within them is food of the best, eternal truth, righteousness, loving-kindness, and grace. To-day there are many who were opium-smokers, gamblers, adulterers, and wicked, even some monks and nuns, who have been saved out of the snare of death into the snare of life, all through trust in Jesus our Saviour Lord, who has indeed saved us to eternal life."

The sermon, both in teaching and expression, lacks something of the ideal, but it must be remembered that this good man is entirely self-taught. A few years ago he could neither read nor write. Now he can write both romanised and character quite creditably. I have given the sermon in full, blemishes and all.

Another style of sermon is of the etymological order, and it can be made both interesting and instructive. The Chinese system of writing lends itself readily to this style. A sermon, for instance, can be preached from the simple character 天, heaven, and three or four headings obtained from it. First, 人, man, is 大, great. Second, there is 一, One, above the greatest man, 天, even Heaven. Third,

heaven includes greatness, for heaven is great in all things —power, wisdom, grace, everything that is great. Fourth, even heaven, 天, is incomplete without 人, man. Fifth, from the 二, "two," in 天, heaven, we may learn that there is a close relationship between heaven above and man below; and so on.

I once heard one of our Ningpo pastors expound the parable of the lost sheep. He explained that though the word for sheep, 羊, kindled little interest in a southern Chinaman's breast, where they now are only known in the shape of goats, there was, nevertheless, a time when the sheep meant much to his ancestors; for an examination of the Chinese characters found in the dictionary under the radical "sheep," shows that the founders of China were nomads and shepherds. Take, for instance, the important word 義 (right, just), from which a long series of words has been formed. Here we have "sheep," 羊, above "I, my," 我, from which it was argued that the original idea of rights in property meant the discrimination of a man's sheep from his neighbour's, and forbade his appropriating a sheep belonging to another. In like manner he showed that ancestral sacrifices, 羹, originally required the selection of a choice lamb, the character when analysed giving "lamb," 羔, and "fine," 美, in other words a choice lamb. So with the word for "shame," a crooked sheep, and the word "nourish," mutton as food; and the word "handsome," a big sheep; from all which he was able to throw a new light on the southern Wenchow mind as to the importance of the sheep, and its meaning as used in Scripture.

Our preachers differ in their sermons as they do in their faces, but whatever their differences, they are one in their intelligent and earnest presentation of the truth. Though none within my hearing has yet ascended to the lofty spiritual heights that are our own priceless possession, yet they are

on the way thither. At present their sermons are suited to the condition of their hearers, and are therefore plain and practical. Their theology and their themes are obtained from the best sources, from the two greatest preachers the world has ever known, Jesus Christ, and His disciple, Paul the missionary.

IX

WOMEN'S WORK

"Those women that laboured with me in the gospel."

WHAT is the position of woman in China? To say "she has none" would be as easy as it would be untrue and impossible. The influence of woman is powerful everywhere, whether she be imprisoned within the walls of a Hindu zenana hidden behind an Arab veil, made to toil and till for her African spouse, loved—and feared—by her British husband, or spoken of apathetically or disparagingly by her Chinese lord and master. Well is it for the world, both occidental and oriental, that though woman may be secluded she cannot be excluded, and that both in East and West she makes herself mistress of the situation. Certain it is that woman in China, if not as openly influential as in Europe, takes no mean position. She rules the home, and her partner in life may talk about her as lightly as he will, and even beat her into temporary submission; none the less does he stand in jeopardy all his days, much as his Western cousin does.

You may quote the classics till your breath fails; you may call up the ghost of Confucius, and those of his disciples, to support you; you may impress on her the importance of the three "obediences"—first to father, then to husband, then to son; you may tell her that "the fulfilment of a wife's destiny is to gratify the wishes of the 'One Man,'" and that "she may not presume to follow her own jugdment." She will admit all, perhaps with a smile, and still proceed to rule the "One Man" and his abode as of yore; and, if she be an anomaly like the Empress Dowager, she will rule his empire as well. There are Chinese wives who hate and despise their husbands, and small wonder; there are

others who love them as faithfully as ever man has been loved, though you may not see it, for "only in the most retired hours may the affection of wife for husband be manifested." There are wives as virulent as Xanthippe, and there are others as mild and gentle as the Madonna. And though a philosopher may make rules by the mile, and his followers cut them into what lengths they will, the soul of woman is free, and human nature refuses to be bound in fetters forged by bloodless academicians. The Chinese woman is too much like her occidental sister to submit to inflexible rules and "philosophic" treatment.

Neither caste nor zenana are known in China in the Hindu sense of those terms. The nearest approach to caste is the degraded position of some whose ancestors held out against the establishment of the present dynasty, whose lives were spared, but who were made perpetual outcasts and disfranchised for ever. There is also the case of a number of others whose occupation is considered menial, such as barbers, lictors, executioners, butchers, play-actors, and a few more; but the chief penalty attaching is that they may not obtain admission to the State examinations and the society of the learned.

As to the zenana, despite the precept in the Chinese "Whole Duty of Woman," that "the true doctrine of husband and wife requires the latter to live in perpetual seclusion," she contrives to fulfil her whole duty by a compromise. Hence, the nearest approach to the zenana is that young wives and grown-up daughters of the wealthy and official classes are seldom seen in public, though, when they do appear, as for instance at the temples or at some public *fête*, they are never veiled as is the case with Western Asiatics.

The amount of seclusion deemed necessary to modesty and demanded by custom cannot be formulated for the whole country, or even for a province, a county, or a town. In some places the women live a free and open life; in others they are seldom seen about the streets, though they are much in evidence at their own doors or in their own courtyards. Modesty, however, everywhere demands that a respectable woman, especially if young, shall not mix herself up unduly

in a crowd. Hence, at a *fête*, or in the temples, the women usually take their places apart from the men.

This custom has necessitated the adoption by the Christian Church of separate seats for men and women. Nowhere are families able to sit in church together; the women go to the women's side, and the men to the men's. Indeed, where, as in Central China, custom is strongest, some churches have adopted a dividing curtain or partition, behind which the women sit. Seeing that there is no screen in the native temples, it is somewhat to be regretted that such a practice has been deemed necessary in the Christian Church, though no doubt its adoption has encouraged many a woman to come to service who otherwise would never have done so; moreover, as the Church grows numerically stronger, this artificial barrier will be removed, just as high pews have been removed from our old churches at home. Fortunately, in the south, the churches have been able to make progress without the aid of such a barrier: the men sit on one side and the women on the other, as in the Swiss Protestant churches and as in some old-fashioned places in the British Isles. Mothers bring their children, who effectually keep their mothers and others from going to sleep.

Being in China, the sex which predominates over the other in our congregations is, of course, the reverse of what is common at home: here the men are most in evidence. It is generally a severe ordeal in a newly established station for the first woman to begin to attend service. Sometimes the men are quite a numerous body before ever a woman is induced to come, and she, practically always, is one whose husband is a Christian, and who at home for some time past has already knelt at the family altar. But as most of our churches have their birth in the home of a Christian, it is easy in such cases for the woman of the house to hear all that is going on, without actually being present in the room, and time emboldens her to enter and take part in the services.

Once the ice is broken it is not difficult for others to follow; and now, in our city and village churches, "the women's side" is an important part of the congregation, and, in the city especially, it is a treat to see them in their neat blue cotton or silk jackets, orderly and devout. A well-starched cotton

jacket covers a multitude of patches and sins, and who can begrudge these women the attempt to look neat and clean which they always make ? We love to look down the women's aisle, and see a couple of hundred or more of them turning their bright faces towards the pulpit, most of them with well- thumbed hymn-books in their hands. If only they could give their children a spoonful each of Mrs Dosem's soothing syrup, just enough to keep them quiet for an hour and a half, what a joyous day Sunday would be to them and to us !

A certain Mission once experimented by appointing one of its lady members, every Sunday morning, to gather up all the papooses and entertain them in another building till after the service. The experiment failed. For one thing, the mothers were so worried about their bairns that the sermon was delivered to divided ears ; whether they feared little Johnny was being cruelly repressed by the stern foreigner, or whether they were afraid of making an exchange at the close of service —perhaps, even, meditating one—we know not. Certain it is that the lady who undertook the task broke down in health soon after, at which no one expressed surprise, and the children went back to their mothers.

At present footbinding is in the stage preceding unbinding. How long this stage will last no wise man will venture to prophesy. He leaves that to his wife. Certain it is that the last ten years have seen a greater advance towards the overthrow of this deplorable custom than the preceding thousand had done. The origin of the practice is shrouded in the mist of antiquity ; some say that it arose at the instance of a club-footed princess, reminding one of the story of the fox without a tail ; others, out of admiration for the shape of the new moon, and really one cannot help thinking that the moon had something to do with it ; still others, that the men introduced the fashion to keep their women from gadding, which view is probably true, as it has signally failed.

What beauty any one can see in club-feet and a broken instep it is difficult to imagine. The sight of the bare foot, with its hideous distortion, ought to be enough to prevent any parent from committing such a barbarism. Yet the women cling to their bandages as tightly as do European ladies to

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their steel armour, but a woman in China looks upon a sister possessing natural feet with infinitely more curiosity than a European lady looks upon another without "mail." It is both amusing and distressing to note how both men and women look quizzingly at the feet of the unbound, as much as to say, "What queer faddists these 'rational dress' people are, to be sure! No decent woman could go about like that." The present Manchu dynasty did not hesitate to impose its tail on the Chinaman at the risk of his head; but, as some one has said, it wisely did not attempt to impose the Manchu natural foot on the Chinawoman: it may not be known to all my readers that Manchu women do not bind their feet.

The crux of the problem is the shoe. She who will invent a well-shaped shoe, which, by its curves, will make the foot look small, though the foot itself remain of natural size, will do more to bring in the happy days of release from bondage than can ever be accomplished by much exhortation and advice. Many women, especially among the Christian communities, have already unbound their feet, and not a few among the upper classes have also taken this bold step, largely as the result of the Natural Foot Society, of which Mrs Archibald Little is the indefatigable President. At the last annual assembly of the Society, held in Shanghai, nearly a thousand Chinese ladies and gentlemen met together in its interests. Unfortunately in many places, particularly where the movement is new, the women who unbind have to adopt a modification of the man's thick-soled shoe, and the poor woman as she goes along the street must sometimes feel as if her whole being had turned into shoe and sole.

Many years ago, one of our native pastors became a convert to the "natural foot" movement, and decided that his daughters' feet should not be bound. His eldest daughter began to attend our Girls' Day School, but, poor child! she had much to endure going to and fro. Sometimes the men would look out of their shop doors, and, gazing at her feet, with a shake of the head, say, "Hm! She has her mother's face, but look—she's got her father's feet!" She bore it bravely, but on one occasion gave way, and, in tears and temper, demanded that her mother should bind her feet at once like other girls'. On her mother's refusing, she took

strips of cotton, went into a corner, and made the attempt herself.

Infanticide still continues to be a custom, with all the evils that follow in its train. By this term, of course, only the destruction of girls is meant, for no Chinaman would think of destroying a boy. We hear little of this practice, and see less; indeed, many Chinese in the city deny its existence, except "in the country." But that it exists to a serious extent was recently brought before my attention by the latest official returns of the Wenchow county. The total male population of this county is 1,170,368, whereas the female portion only numbers 902,799. Four out of the six parishes barely give two females for every three males, and not one gives an equal proportion of males and females. It is difficult to account for so serious a discrepancy save on the ground of the exposure of baby girls.

Poverty is at the bottom of the practice. A boy is worth bringing up, as he is a sort of old age pension, for will he not feed you when you are old, and sacrifice to you after you are dead! Even if you have more sons than you yourself can bring up, somebody will be only too glad to take one off your hands. But a girl! You have to feed and clothe her for years, she never brings in anything, and in the end, when you pass her on as a bride to another family, takes no little away.

Much nonsense has been uttered about Chinese girls being sold in marriage. As a matter of fact, few Chinese parents gain anything by the marriage of a daughter, many on the other hand lose heavily. The money bargained for is her dowry, and is spent in providing her trousseau, part of which consists of household furniture. Some families quarrel over every item; others send off their daughters with great *éclat*. But how is a family that lives from hand to mouth to bring up and marry off a bevy of girls? There is no factory or domestic service for them, and what they can earn at home is a mere pittance. True, they can help the mother, or in the country, while young, look after the cow, but these occupations bring in no money. What wonder that poor families betroth their daughters when only a few years old, and send them off to be brought up in the homes of their future husbands

One old woman confessed to Mrs Soothill that, before she became a Christian, she had one after another destroyed three of her baby girls, and other women have made similar confessions. Just as in ancient Greece, so in China, little shame seems to have attached in the past to the practice; but now the "baby towers" have fallen into disuse, and the dogs are no longer seen at their revolting work. In many places native societies have been established to exhort against this evil, and to provide refuges for children who would otherwise be exposed. Nevertheless, if the figures quoted above be proportionally correct, and there is no reason to doubt their value, then it seems evident that the destruction of girls, though not so apparent as formerly, is still far from an uncommon practice. Moreover, though there are hosts of unmarried men, it is extremely rare to meet with an "old maid"; indeed, it is rare to find a girl of twenty still unwedded.

This dearth of women may also account for the prevailing immorality, for neither bound feet nor seclusion prevents a woman from evil ways, if her heart belong not to her husband. And that any woman comes to love a man whose face she probably has never seen till they are actually man and wife, is difficult for a European to understand. The law against immorality is severe, even permitting the husband to take the dissevered heads of the guilty pair to the nearest magistrate. In practice, however, such an occurrence is rare as snow in June. Natives assert that more than fifty per cent. of the city women are unfaithful. This statement is probably much exaggerated, but it bears strong evidence to the prevailing lowness of moral tone.

In theory divorce is easy; there are seven causes, any one of which justifies the putting away of a wife: undutifulness to the husband's parents, failure to bear a son, jealousy, leprous disease, chattering, stealing, or immorality. But in practice divorce is not very common, for the wife's relatives still keep up an interest in her, and have to be reckoned with. Hence, the husband usually vents his feelings on the recalcitrant wife in an impressive manner, and when her misconduct absolutely passes endurance, perhaps sells her off to some one at a distance, and squares her family with part of

the proceeds. Amongst our Christians there is but little call for reference to this subject. It is true with them, as it was with the Corinthian Church, "such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Whatever our people may have been in the past, our Christian women are now as pure as any in the world.

Female education is rare in China, for only a few of the wealthy have hitherto had their daughters educated. Until the commencement of Mission schools for girls, little if any interest was shown in their mental development. Now there is a stirring among the dry bones, and though as yet it is but "a shaking, and the bones come together, bone to bone," it is nevertheless the first stage in the putting together, vitalising, and elevation of the Chinese woman of the future. Boarding schools are costly, and we as a Mission have never yet been able to afford one, though often have we longed to do so.

A number of years ago Mrs Soothill began an experiment with a day school for girls, and though later it became necessary to provide a dinner, to keep the little dames from being too prominent in the streets, the school has been a decided success. It has grown from just a few to over forty, and only our lack of accommodation, teachers, and funds prevents it from being many times larger. Recently a rule has been made that only girls with unbound feet may be admitted. As parents are afraid of not making a suitable match for such daughters, this has temporarily caused some diminution in the size and age of the girls; but the Church must not shirk its duty in this great battle, and the time seems to have come when well-established stations should face this important subject.[1]

Our Bible-women are a distinct help in evangelising the unconverted and in encouraging those who become interested to attend our services. We have three regularly employed, and three or four more who do occasional work. Our oldest, not in years but in service, is a quaint little woman who lost

[1] Since the above was written, the gentry of the city of Greenfields have started a Girls' School, and put it in charge of a Christian teacher and his wife.

her voice some years ago " preaching against the west wind," as she herself asserts, and who very evidently borrowed or stole one from a raven to fill its place. She travels over more than half this large county, visiting Christian homes along with her companion, preaching to all who gather, fearless and faithful, even to the point of rebuking native pastors if she sees them negligent of their duty.

Once, after preaching in a convert's house to the people who had assembled, she was addressed by a gentleman, a scholar, who said, " Madam, what you have said is excellent ; there is no contradicting it ; it is all true, and we should like to accept it. May I suggest, however, that in your addresses you should not preach Jesus, but only God ; then perhaps scholars like myself would find it more easy to receive the teaching." " Not preach Jesus, sir ! " cried the little woman, " Not preach Jesus ! Why, what should I know about God if it were not for Jesus ? "

More Bible-women are called for, and they need training. Bible-classes for Christian women in town and country are also in demand, but our staff has hitherto been insufficient for that important work. Happily, many of our Christian women are earnest workers, and some of them learn, with how much difficulty God knows, to read their New Testaments. For instance, in the large village of Fung Ling lives a devoted Christian woman who has learnt to read her Testament with a fair amount of ease, and it is always interesting to note the eager attention she pays to the sermon. She listens and treasures up all she can to retail to others. Some years ago she had a Thursday class for women, but was not able unaided to maintain it. Now she is seeking its re-establishment.

To this good woman the Fung Ling church owes much. Soon after the work was started there, a severe persecution broke out, and four of the Christians suffered long in prison before we were able to obtain their release. But she, the wife of the leader, despite the loss of all her worldly goods, despite her wrecked house and the imprisonment of her husband, stood alone and undaunted, trusting in the Lord, whom she had but just learned to love. Borrowing a sleeping-mat from one relative, a bowl or two and some chopsticks

from another, and an old rice pan from a third, she stood by the place, or what was left of it by the rioters, ate frugally, and slept with her child on the ground till such time as her husband was able to return from prison and once more get his home into some order. Her faithfulness helped in no small measure to rehabilitate the scattered church, for she daily, in all modesty, bore testimony to the truth for which her husband was cruelly suffering, at the same time sending him messages to brace his courage, and enable him to bear up bravely until the day of justice should come.

Some time ago a native pastor came in to say that a Christian woman was in great trouble. Her husband was opposed to her being a Christian, and refused to let her go any longer to service. With much self-denial she had already saved enough money to buy a New Testament, and, being more than usually intelligent, had succeeded in learning to spell her way through portions of her precious book. One day her husband came in unexpectedly from the fields and found her reading, which greatly exasperated him; and who shall say that jealousy of her superiority had nothing to do with his excitement! He seized the book from her resisting hands and, laying hold of the wood-chopper, hacked it over and over again, turning it into a very ragged specimen of literature. The poor woman managed to recover her mangled treasure and daily succeeded, with many struggles, in spelling her way down a page of its contents. Now, the pastor was desirous of comforting her heart with a good copy. Would we be willing to make her a present of one? To this a ready response was given, on condition that the chopped Bible be brought in exchange. It is with us still. So are both husband and wife, who are now living happily together in the Christian faith.

In a remote mountain village, situated in the gorge through which the head waters of the "Smaller Fount" of the North River rush over their rocky bed, lives an elderly woman. She is blind and poor—was blind for many years before the eyes of her soul were opened. They were opened, it is true, by an unworthy man—but let that pass; suffice it that they were opened, and that she rejoices in the glorious inner shining. So effectual did she become in prayer with the sick, that ere

long a church was started in her village, and soon she was in demand for a great distance around. People sent, and to this day send chairs to carry her to the many villages where her services are desired. As the result of her zeal and sincerity, three other churches have had their birth. Best of all, her only son, a young man just over twenty, an able preacher, and withal modest, sincere, and manly, has just received his first appointment as assistant pastor, after a two-years' course in our College.

Ten miles to the west of this city is another church which owes much to a woman. She is still young, somewhere over thirty, and her integrity and goodness of character have greatly helped to maintain a work which has cruelly suffered the ravages of death. Member after member has died, producing a most depressing effect on the infant church; for the neighbours naturally look on these deaths as a visitation of the gods, and a warning against the new teaching. Worst of all, last year this woman's husband died also. He was not a baptised member, indeed seldom came to service, but he willingly permitted his wife to become a Christian, and also placed his house at the disposal of the church free of charge. He, in addition, declared his adhesion to the doctrines we teach, but, said he, "I have the food of the family to earn, my business takes me much away from home, and I cannot see my way to lose a Sunday's earnings. I am glad for my wife to do all she can, but my duty is to work in order to keep things going for her and the children." Alas! he has been cut down in the prime of life. Possibly had he possessed more faith, and yielded to his wife's entreaties to observe the Sabbath, his life might have been spared. But he did his duty as far as he saw it, and who shall say that it shall not be "counted unto him for righteousness"!

He cheered his wife by his deathbed testimony, but also left her in poverty with three children to bring up. Very soon after her husband's death she began to take two small meals a day, saying, "I had better begin early to eat frugally, as I shall now have to get used to a hard life." She has asked aid of none, but is receiving a small allowance from our local fund for the poor. The church needs her where she is, or it might be possible to find her greater comfort elsewhere.

We have apprenticed her son to a Christian tailor, and by hard work she will also be able to earn about a penny a day, which will keep her from starvation; moreover, our people, especially the poor, are kind to each other, as far as in them lies.

Our West Gate work, where now there are about a hundred people in attendance, was begun and developed for years by a woman. Her son, formerly a member, has disappointed her, but she prays for him constantly, and looks for the day when he will return to God. She is now in receipt of a small sum monthly, to enable her to go about, as she has done at her own expense for ten years back, carrying the tidings of the gospel into the homes of the city people.

Another elderly woman at Rainbow Bridge is making herself useful in that great district. She is the wife of a man formerly the most wicked rascal in the place. Everybody feared him, therefore none of the many warrants issued for his arrest were ever served. When very short of money he has been known to take a large stone and heave it on to the counter of some shopkeeper, with the remark that he had brought it for sale. The tradesman might be a grocer, a tailor, a tobacconist, a grass-dealer, whose trade by no means lay in stone, but he would not dare to refuse for fear of the man who faced him. As a rule the tradesman simply asked the price and made the best bargain he could. This man's house used to be the rendezvous of all the wild, reckless fellows of the place. At last, when disease had made him loathsome both to himself and to others, he came under the influence of the hospital and the gospel. This entirely changed his old manner of life, much to the joy of the Rainbow Bridge people. He still lives, suffering in a "mortal coil" that it will be a relief to "shuffle off." His wife, a straight, tall, old woman, is far and away the better man of the two, and she now receives a small allowance to go about doing what she can.

Missionaries' wives are in the main as devoted to the work as their husbands, the poorest looking after their husbands' health, and generally showing a constant sympathy with the natives around them; the best doing all this and more. A goad to her husband's lagging conscience, wine to his

weary spirit, guide, philosopher, and friend in every difficulty, balm to his frequent wounds, and joy to his heart—how she can be all this in addition to her classes for girls and for women, to say nothing of being doomed to listen to him so often on Sundays, and to order so well his home, is a marvel in his eyes.

It is, however, the misfortune of the missionary's wife that she has not the same opportunity of learning the language as her unmarried colleague. Marriage immediately on arrival, and the resulting cares of maternity, prevent her spending that time in study which she longs to spend. The rule of sending out the future wife, a year or two before marriage, to some other station, in order that she may have time for learning the language, is an admirable one. There are cases where this cannot be done, and then the husband may well spare time to see her properly taught; for, if not a hindrance, it can be but little encouragement to have a wife who knows nothing of the language, and consequently who has a less intelligent interest in his life's work.

For a woman to live abroad, determined only to be a missionary's wife and not a missionary-wife, is, for both their sakes, to be deplored. Happily such instances are rare, for, when a Christian lady sees the needs of her heathen sisters, her heart goes out and she cannot remain idle. There is a story told of a lady going out as a missionary's wife, who was questioned by some member of the "Board" as to whether she loved the work. "No," she replied, "but I love the man!" And she later became the best worker on the field. So every gifted woman, who, on arriving in China, has her eyes opened to the privileges which have been her heritage, with their consequent responsibility, will perforce bend her energies to the amelioration of the lot of her less favoured sisters.

Nevertheless, a tropical climate *is* enervating, and, with the best will in the world, a wife finds herself unable to do the same amount of work that an equally capable but untied sister can undertake. Hence there is a clamant demand for single ladies, gifted, educated, healthy, sympathetic. They are needed to hold Bible-classes, to develop girls' schools, and, perhaps most important of all, to train and

superintend Bible-women, who can be sent out two and two, to evangelise the women in their town and village homes; for into many of them a native preacher has no entry, and a foreign lady would hardly be welcome. In our own Mission we have great joy in our women's work, but prosperous though it be, it cries loudly for some one to come and help it forward. How many single ladies there are in England, with a sufficient income for their self-support, who are putting their talents to good use, but not to the best use, who have not yet learned that "le bon est l'ennemi du meilleur," and who would find a scope out here of which they had never dreamt, a life filled with usefulness, contentment, and joy.

Let it be borne in mind that woman rules the home in China as elsewhere; and, given a Christian mother, you imbue her offspring with Christianity, or at least with a sympathy for Christianity. To capture the home is to capture the empire.

X

MEDICAL WORK

"And they anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them."

MEDICINE is our substitute for miracle. Whatever the cause, we cannot do the wonderful works wrought by the Apostles. It may be our lack of faith; it may be the power has been withdrawn, having served its purpose; or, it may be the power is here within man's reach as much as ever, and that what our Saviour did was an indication of what is possible to man, even as this generation has seen the miraculous, in the fulfilment of the promise held out to men from prehistoric ages, by the birds of the air and the fish of the sea.

Whatever the reason, certain it is that we missionaries of Jesus Christ cannot place our hands on the blind and they see, nor on the lame and they walk, nor on the palsied and they are loosed from their bond; nor can we put our fingers into the ears of the deaf and they hear; nor with any occult power, nor any faith within the acquaintance of present-day man, can we call the dead back to life again. Neither can the Christian scientist, nor any school of faith healers. It is just here that they fail: and for this reason they have no right to arrogate to themselves that which they do not possess. If they are searchers in the great school of knowledge, then modesty will mark them; when they are blatant and assuming, they prove themselves charlatans,

While also it is true that what is a miracle to one age, or even to one person, is only an everyday occurrence to another, it is equally true that the miracles done by Christ and His Apostles remain miracles in this wonder-working twentieth century. The sceptical may doubt their reality, just as

millions of Chinese doubt the possibility of flying or submarine propulsion; nevertheless the miracles of Christ are of encouragement to those who see behind them that Power of God which some day, whether for cure or prevention, is to become a power of man. Thank God for the mysteries! When they are all solved it will almost be time for the world to cease revolving.

Though they do work miracles, it is not as miracle-workers that medical missionaries come to China. It can hardly even be said to be sympathy with suffering humanity. Brought down to basal fact, they do not come, they are sent; for the same Power is behind them that was behind the Apostles, and the Power is insistent. There is, indeed, no need for them to come as wonder-workers. The Chinese Christians themselves are already gifted in that direction. Our converts cannot, it is true, raise the dead, though they sometimes assert that God has also done this in answer to their prayers. They cannot, and never claim that they can, make the dumb speak, the lame walk, the deaf hear, or the leprous clean, but they can "cast out devils." And China teems with devils. Over these our Christians have great power. Though the poor demoniac's own friends dare not approach him, our people are ever bold to attack the demon in his stronghold, and there by the power of prayer to conquer him, even though his name be Legion.

An old Christian, a B.A., once said to me: "I notice you do not yourself go to pray with demoniacs. How is it?" Here was a poser. Honestly, I had not been able to go, because my faith was not strong enough, and fear of failure, and of thereby being a hindrance to others, prevented me. "I have not had any experience in these matters," was my reply. "Ah," said he, "I thought so. Christianity has driven all the demons out of your country, and they have all come over here. That accounts for their swarming in China."

Certain it is that whether from natural or supernatural causes, this people is ridden with a possession which makes the lives of many a burden, and is the ruin of innumerable homes. The demon may be the fox demon, the monkey demon, the white cock demon, or a host of other demons; but whatever demon it be, the sufferer often mimics the sound

of the creature's voice and its actions, and makes demands for the wasting of the family property in idolatrous worship, such as, in his sane moments, he would never have dreamt of making. To cases like these do our people go in all confidence, having faith in God that He will rid the sufferer and his family of their tormentor. Many are the cases in which relief has been almost instantaneous, and the individual at service next Sabbath clothed and in his right mind.

No foreign doctor can perform, or rather does perform, such a cure. Hence it is not as this kind of wonder-worker that he comes out; our converts are stronger than he in this respect. He comes to do the work they cannot do. As we have said, they cannot make the blind to see; he often can, and what is equally important, he prevents many seeing eyes from becoming blind. They cannot make the deaf hear: he often does. They cannot by their prayers, however earnest, set a dislocated shoulder; nobody ever did, and there is no present indication that anybody ever will, any more than anybody will ever build a tower by prayer, though he may with it: but our doctor can set the shoulder, as the builder will build the tower. They cannot cleanse the leper; no more can the doctor, but he can make him cleaner and happier, and many an apparently leprous man has been made sweet and whole by his ministrations. They cannot pray a dirty bullet from a wound, or pray the fractured bone together; it was never intended they should do, and so the doctor has been sent for this work, the work they cannot do.

Thus in the absence of the power possessed by the Apostles of anointing with oil, laying on the hands in prayer, and becoming direct conductors of health to the suffering, there is no more Christ-like work given to men than this which is given to our medical missionaries, of being conductors, albeit in tardier fashion, of health to suffering humanity. Especially is this so in a country where the native doctor, never having seen inside the human body, gets the internal organs all mixed up, and where also literally everything is medicine, from the costly gall of a tiger to the excrement of a fowl, both of which are as useless as they are disgusting. Not that the Chinese have no good drugs. To begin with, there is rhubarb, largely exported to England; and there are hosts

of other useful medicines, such as gentian, digitalis, aloes, cardamines, peppermint, etc. Indeed, the Chinese native doctors are somewhat like English herbalists, who with their simples are helpful to many.

What can men do, though, whose ideas of anatomy are that the liver is on the left side and the lungs on the right; that the left pulse indicates the condition of the heart, liver, and kidneys, and the right pulse the condition of the spleen, lungs and other organs? What are you to do with a people whose chief division of diseases is into cold humours and hot humours, and who describe their complaint as a cold humour in the upper half and a hot one in the lower, or *vice versâ!*

In surgery they are well-nigh as helpless as children. True, a few, pugilists generally, can set bones fairly well, but an amputation is beyond their skill. They place great faith in such second-rate remedies as acupuncture, blistering, and excoriation. Fortunately they have never indulged in that gory delight of bleeding which gave our medicos of a century ago such unbounded satisfaction. It is to heal, and to teach to heal on scientific principles, slowly acquired during centuries of research, that our Mission doctors are sent, and well and manfully do they fill their noble office.

Our medical work in Wenchow was begun by a very ignorant young man. Before leaving England I had provided myself with a somewhat elaborate chest of homœopathic tinctures, and having no other way of being useful, commenced practice on the principles of *similia similibus curantur*. For years these tinctures, with the addition of quinine, sulphur, bluestone, sulphate of zinc, and other drugs were my daily companions, and were much sought after both in town and country. When I began to travel about, they certainly helped to swell my audiences; and as the would-be patients had first to swallow the sermon, or as much of it as they could, before receiving their dose of tincture, it was thought possible, if not to kill two birds with one dose, at least to capture one bird with the two nets of preaching and healing. Nor was the effort a failure. Anyhow, homœopathy was so safe that it produced a sense of safety, and whatever good I was able to do was unaccompanied with harm.

Twice I attempted surgery. In one case it was on a youth's protruding tooth, and after tugging and perspiring freely without even giving him any pain or loosening the tooth one iota—it was solid rock—I sent him home to await my recovery!

In the other case it was a small operation for entropion. By the time I had excised the skin from the old man's upper eyelid, and begun to find a difficulty in pushing the needle through the tough integument, it seemed to me that I was covered with vital fluid, that I should never finish my stitching, and end by being arrested on a charge of homicide. As a matter of fact he hardly lost a dozen drops, though by the effect they produced on my unaccustomed nerves they must have been an unusually vivid red. The old man recovered rapidly, has been able to see better ever since, and founded a church in his village, whether out of gratitude to me or thankfulness for his spared life—his groans almost stopped the beating of my heart — I have never inquired. He is now one of our oldest Christians, a loyal, devoted old soul, who is ever delighted to hear of the spread of the gospel.

Heartily would I recommend any man, who is going to a remote district out of the reach of a doctor, to obtain a few months' training in medicine and simple surgery, and if he cannot have that, let him take out a box of simple remedies and use them. If they *per se* do some good, as they certainly ought to do, they will open the way for the greater Cure which he brings. At least, if wisely used, they will show his sympathy to be of a tangible nature—something that the people can understand from the outset, and not too ethereal " for human nature's daily food."

The next step in advance was when my first colleague arrived. He, the Rev. J. W. Heywood, now of Ningpo, brought with him the experience of a six months' course in the Manchester Infirmary, plus rows of large bottles, which made my poor wee phials look like Tom Thumbs alongside the Russian giant. It was with joy that I handed over to him my practice—which was probably as great an expense to me as benefit to my patients—and well did he build it up. Soon, in order to give him time for study, it became necessary to have fixed dispensary days, and afterwards the advisability

of removing the work from the house to the city church became apparent. At that time there was resident here Dr J. H. Lowry, of the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs, and he voluntarily rendered gracious and very valuable occasional aid, both in the dispensary and to our own staff. As a Mission we are highly indebted to him for much kindness and skill.

Only a fortnight ago, a man who was applying for baptism told me that he had first been led to appreciate Christianity, more than ten years ago, at this little dispensary. He had brought his wife, suffering from some skin trouble; and after she had been some time under Mr Heywood's treatment the man was able to take her home cured. What affected him as much as anything, however, was not only the cure, but that Mr Heywood, thinking them in need, had offered to pay their travelling expenses home. They did not need help, for he had brought enough for all their requirements; but it made a deep impression on him, that the foreigner was not only kind enough to spend his time and use his medicine, but was also anxious to see them reach home safely. He has been attending service many years, and now seeks baptism.

Another case which started our work in an important centre was that of a poor leper, also treated by Mr Heywood. We were one day called out to the back door, to see a wretched-looking object, which had crawled on its knees, pushing a stool before it for support, over ten miles of a rough country footpath, and, after a boat journey down the river, for another two miles through the busy city streets to our house, where report said wonderful cures were performed. It was a man forty years of age, though he hardly wore a human appearance.

Neither of us had seen leprosy before, and did not know if this were such a case; but whether leprosy or not, the poor fellow seemed so utterly beyond our skill that we sought to send him away with a little temporary assistance. He begged so earnestly, however, and his gentle eyes and attractive smile so pleaded for him that our hearts melted, and he was taken in, to see if anything could be done for him. Slow and wearisome was the process, but after some months he was sent home a new man. His skin was healed and clean,

his strength had come back to him; and though his hands and feet were still numb and slightly paralysed, he was able to return to his native place, and for a time keep himself by herding a few goats. What pleased us most was, that from the first his mind had been quick to appreciate the beauty of the Saviour, and, on reaching home, it was not long before he gathered about him a few relatives and friends, who formed the nucleus of a church.

Soon his disease broke out afresh, and he was again down in the city undergoing treatment; but, after once more patching him up, he was sent back to his goat-herding. This went on time after time for some years; yet his increasing weakness and physical misery never altered the sweet smile with which he greeted us, nor the gentleness of his disposition. Unfortunately his weakness did prevent him safeguarding his little flock of goats, some of which were stolen, and others carried off by wild animals. We did what we could for him, and his relatives also helped.

One evening the beginning of the end arrived. He was sitting at his table with a small open light by his side. After a while he casually turned his head, and saw with surprise that his hand was in the lamp; withdrawing it, he found that his little finger was almost burnt off. He had suffered no pain, but the finger was gone. Another visit to the city was involved, which was his last, for his next attempt carried him on a joyful journey to the Heavenly City. It is known that he reached a point on the river bank, where he sat waiting for a passing boat, but nothing more was ever learnt save that his dead body was found in the river. No! he was not the man to commit suicide. He had, we believe, overbalanced and fallen into the swift stream. But hurried though he was to the Land where the leper may be the cleaner for his leprosy, he left behind him a work which has grown, the one church he founded being now three.

Our next great step forward was the obtaining of a fully qualified medical man. Towards the end of 1893 Dr Alfred Hogg was sent out, and after spending nearly a year in studying the language, he took over the medical department. Mr Heywood had fitted up a dispensary at the city church, but the only accommodation for in-patients was a room or

two I had put up some years previously for an opium refuge, and these now turned out very useful as an embryo hospital. When Dr Hogg arrived the rooms were already overcrowded, and withal were not well suited for the growing work. Moreover, the city church needed these premises for other purposes, and the time had manifestly arrived for the erection of a more suitable building, giving accommodation for in-patients, and enlarged possibilities for the increasing number of out-patients.

Hence, on the recommendation of my old friend and pastor, the Rev. A. J. Walkden, the late Mr John Dingley of Yarmouth undertook to erect the buildings we then required. Land was bought, wards for twelve men and ten women, with outhouses, kitchens, and lodge, were erected, and as our principal work was dispensary treatment a good-sized dispensary and chapel or waiting-room was built. These buildings have served their purpose for nine years, and are soon to be utilised as a schoolroom for our three hundred boys.

In the meantime Dr W. E. Plummer has taken the place of Dr Hogg, and during the last three years the wards have been enlarged and more than doubled in number, the very cellars being fitted up with beds. The women also have had to be removed to our own compound to make more room for the men. Once more the times and the man have demanded adequate consideration. Again our premises have been outgrown, and our needs clamorous. The result, in the providence of God, is that Mr Henry Blyth, who built our Ningpo Hospital, and who was an old friend of Mr Dingley's, has stepped into the breach. Most generously has he undertaken, at his own expense, to build us a new hospital to contain a hundred and fifty beds, with all the necessary appurtenances of dispensary and chapel for out-patients, operation and dressing-rooms, kitchens and outhouses. The handsome building is just completed, and will be fulfilling its beneficent mission ere this book is in print.

Over ten thousand visits are paid by patients to the dispensary annually. Last year the total reached 11,630, and in addition there were 5740 purchasers of medicine at the drug-store during its first nine months of existence; so

NEW BLYTH HOSPITAL

that the Dingley Hospital has seen within its walls a grand total of more than seventy thousand out-patients, most of whom have heard for the first time the tidings of salvation which we come to bring. Again, last year there were 740 in-patients; and since its erection over four thousand sick people have occupied the beds of the Dingley Hospital.

Our doctor is a busy man. What with 12,000 out-patients and 700 in-patients a year; with 400 operations, 200 of them under chloroform; with 450 visits paid to European members of the community, every penny of their fees going into the hospital funds; with the almost daily teaching during nine months of the year of his half-a-score native students and assistants; and with the arranging of, and for the most part personal presence at 550 services and lantern lectures for the patients every year, we defy any one to call Dr Plummer lazy. And the total cost to our Mission Fund of this great work, apart from the doctor's salary, is only about £100 a year. Compared with the cost of hospitals in England this pittance sounds quite ridiculously insignificant. Yet the doctor is not content, for he is bent, with every prospect of speedy success—on making his department entirely independent of our general Mission Fund.

Would you like to pay a visit to the Dingley Hospital? It will be a greater pleasure to take you round the Blyth Hospital in another month or two, but the method of working and the type of patient will remain the same there, so you may see in these crowded quarters what you would see in the larger and more perfect building.

Here, then, at the entrance is the gatekeeper's house. She is a stout old dame, and, as it is dispensary hour, you notice that there is a crowd around her window paying in their thirty copper cash apiece, value about a penny, for which in return each person receives a bamboo tally with a figure on it. Crossing the small courtyard they enter the chapel. It is now nine o'clock, and the place is full. We see a motley crowd—good clothes and patches, intelligence and loutishness, clean skins and sores that disturb your equanimity, adults and little children, Christians and idolaters all mingle together and take their seats side by side. Here on the

speaker's left sit the women, some of them hugging their babies and chattering as usual.

In comes the doctor with his students, an intelligent, clean-looking half-dozen, all professing Christians. Hymn-sheets on which are printed four verses of a hymn, a text, a short prayer, and the dispensary hours and charges are handed round. The hymn is read over and explained, the doctor plays over the tune on his asthmatic little organ—asthma in men and instruments is not easily cured in this climate—and we—no, do not sing, but make a noise. Half of those present have never heard or sung to the praise of God in all their lives, nor even heard that there is a God. A short address follows, and a prayer closes the little service, which is strictly limited to a quarter of an hour. The medicos disappear, and promptly comes the cry, "No. 1, No. 2," and so on; hearing which, the happy possessors of the tallies bearing those figures and who may have been waiting since seven o'clock, come in haste to the door leading to the consulting-room.

By this time the students have taken their places, two of them in the dispensing room, and the rest at their respective tables. A patient is sent to each of the latter, whose duty it is to carefully go into the history of the case, write it down in romanised on the printed sheet before him, make his diagnosis, indite the prescription, and pass on the patient for Dr Plummer's confirmation. Most of the prescriptions pass, but now and then a more careful examination seems called for, and the student comes forward to assist in making it. In this way the patients obtain satisfactory treatment, and the students excellent practical training. By this method as many as a hundred and sixty patients have been treated in one morning.

Now, if you will step over to the building opposite we will look through the in-patient department. Up this flight of steps, please, for when first built the wards were raised six feet from the ground, so as to be high and dry. On the left is the warder's cubicle and through the door you will find the patients in two rows. The ward is bare, save for a few coloured prints with which the doctor has garnished the walls; the beds are the plainest iron, no wire mattresses,

only boards; no snow-white sheets and pillows, only blue cotton quilts; no vases of flowers, no frills of any sort, for our warder is of course a man, and a Chinaman. By the time he has washed the floor, brought the patients their meal, and, not washed them, but handed each the usual wet cloth to wipe his face *after* eating, which is the Chinese form of grace after meals, the warder has little time left for other embellishments.

As to the patients—well, no one on earth surely looks so utterly woebegone as a sick Chinaman. His hair grows stubbly on the top of his head, his tail gets rucked up, and his clothes come all unbuttoned; his skin takes on a dull hue, very different from the not unpleasing pallor of the invalid white man; in a word, the sick Chinaman does his illness the fullest justice.

In this cot to our left lay a man for six months, from the city of Jui-an, who had stepped on a rusty nail. After enduring months of agony at the hands of native doctors, who kept his leg bent off the side of his bed, in such a fashion that the knee-joint had become ankylosed, he was advised to come here. The leg was black and swollen, and there seemed nothing possible but amputation. A one-legged man, however, is seldom seen in China, as amputation is unknown, so Dr Plummer decided to make an attempt at cure, though the outlook was to all appearances hopeless.

For months the man lay in this bed till the ulcerated parts, with discouraging slowness, had nearly healed; then the tendons behind the knee were cut, and the doubled-up leg released from its bonds. After a time he was sent home hobbling with a couple of crutches, but the leg had just been saved from gangrene or complete atrophy, circulation was restored, and within a year of his return home he was able to cast away his sticks. Now, along with his buxom, cheery wife and his sturdy children, he comes regularly to service, limping but slightly, and always deeply grateful for his spared life and his restoration to activity.

While here he was also cured of the opium habit, which he had contracted to ease the suffering caused by his terrible leg. Never shall I forget his language as he was going under the anæsthetic before operation: it was lurid to a degree;

his big strong face became contorted with irrepressible fury, and there poured from his lips a torrent of obscene language that plainly indicated unlimited practice — he was a pork butcher by trade. Such language to-day is an impossibility to him. He is a member of our Jui-an church, and a ready witness to the gospel which saved him and now adorns his life.

In the bed over there lay a youth for months, both his legs a mass of putridity. Ultimately cured, he took the tidings of salvation to his home sixty miles away, and gathered a few people together, whose numbers increased until a pastor was demanded. In 1900, the head man of the place destroyed the youth's home, where these few people had formed their church, the nearest service on the south being twenty miles off, and on the north fifty. The head man, a military M.A., also seized the preacher, tried to take out his eyes and to cut off his ears, from doing which indeed he was only restrained by his own father's petitions. Before the pastor was released, the Christians were mulcted in the huge fine of $3000, which necessitated the pawning of all they possessed; and yet, though the building was razed to the ground and the handful of Christians scattered, the work was not destroyed, but is now prosperous, and two other churches, even stronger than the original, have grown from it.

There, in the other bed, lay a youth who, though resident in this city, had never heard about God. While here he became a convert, and was in consequence forbidden the house by his mother and step-father. We started him in business with a dollar, and he commenced hawking sweet-stuff about the streets; but, after a month or so had passed, he was sought out by his mother and invited home again. "Not unless you will allow me to be a Christian," he said. Consent was grudgingly given, and now both father and mother are members, and the young man himself an acceptable preacher. He also last year induced other neighbouring Christians to join him in renting a room and furnishing it for evening services. Fifty to a hundred people are generally present at these meetings, which are carried on entirely free of expense to the Mission.

In this bed by the door rested Mr Chang, and also

Ah Yao Pah, who both, during their stay within these walls, bore glad testimony to the power of Christ to save. In that lay a barber, whose past life had left him an utter wreck, whose whole body was a mass of corruption, whose features were twisted out of shape, and who had mortgaged his wife to another man till he could again afford to keep her. For years after his first patching up he was a regular attendant at the dispensary. He professed Christianity, and was principally the means of founding what has become a very prosperous meeting in a busy quarter of the city. His marital arrangements, however, prevented his admission to baptism; moreover, he had never really "experienced" Christianity, and some time ago withdrew from us.

Beyond the door, at the far end of the ward, is the operating room, a recent addition, where things surgical are performed, ranging from iridectomy to doing something to an empyema, which simple words, no doubt, are as easy for the ordinary man to understand as are the others in the doctor's list. Below us are the cellars; if we go down, we shall find these also converted into wards. Take care of your head—the total height is only six feet, and the door is some inches less. In this dark place we are compelled to keep a dozen patients until the new building is finished.

Round the corner is our chemist's shop, a recent institution, where drugs can be bought and prescriptions dispensed at any time during the day. This saves the time of both doctor and patient, as, if a prescription is answering its purpose, the patient can readily have it repeated without awaiting a consultation. Already a considerable business is being done at a profit, which is a welcome help to our finances. In our new hospital, adjoining the street, a drug shop is being specially built, and we expect this department to materially advance Dr Plummer's admirable effort after self-support.

Behind us are the kitchens and outhouses, and through this gateway is what was the women's ward. The men have driven the women out, and they are now temporarily quartered in our dwelling-house compound. The ex-women's

ward is well tenanted by men, even the cellar being occupied.

Services are held every day for the in-patients, and the speaker always receives an attentive hearing. I went past the women's ward this morning on my way to the new building, and it was interesting to see every one of its occupants kneeling with Mrs Plummer in prayer. No compulsion is brought to bear, but the patients are not in long before they willingly kneel to worship the great God about whom they are daily told. So religious do some become, that they will not swallow a dose of medicine till they have said a prayer over it, which, as someone remarked, is better than pulling a wry face beforehand. And if grace before meat is advisable, how much more is prayer before medicine, and grace afterwards !

When we were recently visiting a large island out at sea, a young woman, to whom my daughter had shown some attention during her stay in the hospital, would hardly leave her side all the time we were there. She was not a Christian when she came to the city, but is now in regular attendance at our services on that island. Another woman, who in a fight with a neighbour had had part of her ear bitten off, and who in consequence had to be in the hospital for some weeks, has to-day come a long way to be present at the Thursday Women's Meeting, and professes a determination to be a Christian in the fufure.

A more Christ-like work than is being done in the hospital it were not easy to conceive, for Christ it was Who united the preaching of the Kingdom of God with the healing of the sick. Our hospital motto is " He sent them forth to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick," and, according to the ability of the staff, the sick are healed, and the gospel is preached. We would show even greater kindness if we dare, for sometimes it is hard to send men home to die, but the Chinese are very superstitious, and a death in the hospital is almost enough to send all the patients home, lest the ghost of the departed should take possession of them. Moreover, even to this day the voice of scandal, at rare intervals, whispers wickedly. This we are gradually living down, and the day will dawn, when we may be justi-

fied in providing a room where "hopeless cases" may die in peace, instead of their being turned away to die in miserable surroundings.

Great things have already been done, still greater lie before us, and we are making ready for them.

XI

OPIUM

"An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire."

WHAT book on this country is complete that does not refer to "China's curse and England's shame?" That a war was fought on the matter which came to be known as the Opium War, proves the subject to be of no small magnitude, and that there are, to this day, two diametrically opposed views on the subject, one considering the trade legitimate, the other iniquitous, shows that there is still room for the statement of another man's views and experiences. Were the import limited to medicinal requirements controversy would at once cease, and the Anti-Opium Society have no further reason for existence. But no one believes that the import is limited to even the widest notion of medical requirement. On the contrary it is generally admitted to be of vast and far-reaching proportions.

On my first voyage out in 1882, my natural prejudice against the trade became considerably modified by the arguments of an old British Consul, who was a fellow-passenger and who also held up for my admiration, because he had refused to sign a petition against the traffic, a missionary for whom I already had a high esteem. This missionary afterwards became my very close friend, and I learnt that the sole cause of his refusal to sign arose, not from lack of aversion to the drug, which he abhorred as earnestly as those who had drawn up the petition, but from despair of the petition's utility. Since then I have listened to many excuses for the trade—though never from a Missionary—not one of which was not an accusation.

Certainly I have never yet met a Chinaman who expressed gratitude for the introduction of the drug, nor an Englishman, official, merchant or missionary, who was proud of Britain's share in the transaction. That Chinaman is rarely met with who, not engaged in the traffic nor enslaved by the drug, would not favour its suppression ; so also is that Englishman who, not profiting by the trade, would not be gratified to see our Indian Exchequer replenished from a less questionable source. Does there not in this distaste alone, lie sufficient cause for the indictment of opium, and our national connection with it ?

A still stronger indictment, however, may be found in the fact that Japan, beholding the debasing influence of the drug, so near her own doors, rigorously and effectively opposes its promiscuous sale within her sea-girt shores, where it is only obtainable for strictly medicinal purposes. Even Chinese residents in Japan are forbidden its use. Not only so, but on taking over Formosa after the war of 1893-4, where, under Chinese rule, the narcotic had previously had unrestrained scope for evil amongst the large Chinese population, the Japanese immediately brought its sale under stringent surveillance. Every Chinese smoker was compelled to take out a permit, no Japanese was allowed to commence the habit, and according to the unbiassed Report of the recent United States Opium Commission, the trade is in a fair way towards total suppression.

There are partisans of the trade who declare that opium is the greatest of boons to the Chinese and that, without it, their lives would be intolerable. Such men forget that the Chinese were a fine and flourishing race for more than two thousand years before the advent of this " boon," and that they certainly have not improved since.

On the other hand the anti-opium enthusiast claims that opium is the deadliest scourge the world has ever known. He surely has overlooked the ravages of war, of the black death, of the slave traffic, of famine and consumption—and yet, after all, has he overlooked them ? Certain it is that the drug is responsible for no inappreciable proportion of the annual death-rate. If this rate be taken at the modest figure of thirty per thousand per annum, and if opium causes

the death of one of these thirty, then is opium responsible for a mortality of four hundred thousand every year. Even reduce its responsibility to one per cent of the death-rate and the number of its annual victims nearly equals the total loss of both Russians and Japanese during the recent war, enough to form a great "city of the dead." So, perhaps, the enthusiast is not as far wrong as he seems to be, in his "wild statement" that opium is the deadliest scourge the world has ever known.

No figures can be produced from any authoritative source, for there is no registrar of births and deaths in China, and mere surmise is an unsafe guide. Yet there are indications that are not without value, and, as a great authority says, "Probability is the guide of life." For instance, in this, one of the thirteen hundred townships of China, on a very low estimate, at least half a score emaciated wretches die annually in the streets, and if such can be taken as an average for the whole Empire, thirteen thousand deaths are accounted for in this way alone. Mr Stobie and I one evening passed two such victims lying side by side in the street. Approaching for a closer inspection some passers-by joined us, and one of them, giving the younger a shake, said aloud, "Quite dead." At once a pitiful, frightened cry burst spasmodically from the dying youth's lips, "Wa-mi, wa-mi," "Not yet, not yet." The other man was past our aid, and, discretion forbidding our doing for the still living one what was in our hearts to do, we there and then, sent for some beggars, gave them enough money for immediate needs, and promised if they would keep the youth alive for thirty-six hours we would pay them handsomely, and then take him off their hands for restoration and reformation. It was, however, too late; he died the same night. Only a few years before he had been in affluent circumstances.

It is probable that the number who annually commit suicide with the drug, is much more than double the number of those who die uncared for in the streets, for the drug is so handy, so little is required, "only thirty cash, a penny's worth," from the "black-smoke hall" round the corner. Again the number of those who are not reduced to a death in the streets, or driven to suicide, but who, nevertheless,

die of the "black-smoke disease," or "opium complaint" is greater still. And there remains a mass of men, women, and—in Western China—even children whose strength is so sapped by the loss of appetite resulting from the habit that they have no stamina to resist disease, and yearly swell enormously the list of victims. As to the infant, and even adult mortality, resulting from neglect and starvation, it is impossible to form an estimate. Probabilities are all that we have as data, but, granted their reasonableness, it does not seem as if the enthusiast had been at all wrong in including War in his accusation, for all the wars of the world do not average anything like a death-rate of a hundred thousand a year.

These figures also surpass both plague and famine, since such visitations are confined to a few dark years, whereas opium, from the middle of the nineteenth century, has had a continuous responsibility. Whether it surpasses consumption we have no criterion for comparison. Enough has, however, been said to show that, if there has been exaggeration, it is scarcely on the part of the antagonist of opium, but rather on the part of its advocate, who declares opium to be a "boon" to the Chinese.

A recent racy writer—he went through China at a good pace!—tells us that he nowhere saw the emaciated opium smokers, whom he had expected to meet everywhere. In like manner, two years ago I spent three months in England, travelling from one end of the land to the other, but only twice did I see a man the worse for liquor. Am I therefore justified in inferring that drunkenness is practically unknown in England? Photography can fabricate much, but it is not easy for even a clever photographer to fabricate an emaciated opium smoker. Yet many such photographs have been published. These wrecks are here, and the man who can see the difference between one Chinaman and another will not fail to recognise them.

Let it not be thought, however, that all opium smokers are sots. They distinctly are not. Most begin the habit through the enticement of friends, and for the sake of companionship and amusement, but some commence through illness, and those who suffer from bronchitis, asthma, or

severe pain undoubtedly obtain relief from its administration. I know men who have been smokers for decades, and though it is manifest that they are devotees of the pipe, they keep alive and are mentally acute. I know others who being wealthy are able to afford appetising food, and therefore keep up their appearance after thirty years of smoking. But such is not the rule, for the majority in their dull pallid faces soon reveal their unfortunate slavery to the habit. While therefore it is not fair to say that opium ruins all who take it, neither can it be truly said that the majority do so without suffering. Rather would it be fair to assert, that it is but few who take it with impunity, that the majority suffer physically, and that to a great multitude opium means financial injury, moral degradation, physical debility, and premature death.

The rapidity with which this vicious habit took hold of the people during the nineteenth century, is amazing and incredible. That great century, with all its glorious record of progress throughout the rest of the world, was the century of China's greatest degradation. Not until that "wonderful century" did opium stretch its vampire wings over this devoted Empire, and commence to drain the vitality from its veins and the stamina from its fibre.

The drug, first brought to China by the Arabs in the ninth century, and probably known on the Indo-Chinese border long before that date, took a thousand years to grow from the infinitesimal quantity first introduced, to the thousand chests annually imported by the Portuguese at the close of the eighteenth century. But it was under British "enterprise" that the trade experienced its injurious expansion. In less than one century, under British commercial energy, this trifling amount grew to over a hundred thousand chests a year. So that, though it took a thousand years for the drug to grow to a thousand chests, it took less than a hundred under the British, to increase this legitimate quantity to the enormous dimensions of a hundred thousand chests a year. This import drains from China, for the benefit of our Indian treasury, an annual sum of more than £10,000,000, which is as great a loss to China as a much larger sum would be to England.

OPIUM SMOKERS

Can it be wondered then that the nobler-spirited amongst the Chinese rulers resisted, even though hopelessly, all recognition of this drug as an article of commerce? Had they been supported by the southern mandarins, who evidently would have sold their country, or their souls, for a bribe, the constant smuggling in of the poison might have been prevented during its earlier stages. Who, for instance, will accuse the Emperor Tao Kuang of complicity, when on discovering to what an extent the illicit trade had grown, he ordered Commissioner Lin to demand from the English merchants, and to utterly destroy, all the opium in their warehouses, valued at £2,000,000, and also commanded him to remain in Canton, till the whole of this forbidden article of trade was finally excluded from his Empire? He it was who, until compelled by force of British arms, absolutely refused to receive a penny from the degradation of his people by licensing the importation. And while recognising the arbitrariness of the Chinese higher officials of those days, and the probability of a collision sooner or later, every Christian Englishman must deeply regret that the immediate cause of war should have been this injurious drug.

As to Wenchow, twenty-five years ago opium dens were still but little in evidence. They hid their shamed heads up narrow lanes and alley-ways. To-day all this is changed, and there is not a street without one. Fourteen years ago I was requested to find out the number of such resorts, and discovered that there were seven or eight hundred within our city walls. Two years ago exact particulars were obtained which showed that there then were over twelve hundred licensed houses, or one for every hundred of the population, women and children included; in other words, one to every thirty of the male adults.

Perhaps, however, the worst phase of all, the final step in this *descensus Averni* is the local cultivation. Twenty years ago the poppy was not much in evidence hereabouts. Now it flaunts its gorgeous robes wherever the soil admits of its growth. Hence the Indian product is now a declining import, for though native opium is not so well prepared as Indian, the disparity in price is so great that only the wealthy can afford the "foreign earth."

It has been shown in another part of this book what a hindrance the cultivation of the poppy is to the growth of the native Church. The missionary recognises the necessity of maintaining an unwavering attitude towards the man who deliberately opens an opium den, or who is in any way a purveyor of the drug, as the man's position ranks him at once along with, indeed lower than a maker of images or a seller of incense, for this kind of " covetousness is idolatry " of the basest. But what of the men, hosts of them, who in consequence of enhanced land-rents cannot make ends meet unless they grow the poppy ! After all there is no one in the world with greater temptation to temporise and wink at the habit, if he dare, than the missionary.

Opium cultivation has within recent years been legalised, nor can we blame the Chinese for taking such a step, as, in view of the drain of money to India, either this or national insolvency seemed to face them. Moreover, and what is worse, familiarity with the vice had hardened what little tenderness was still left in the official conscience. The law, too, against cultivation had long been a dead letter. Consequently, land which is suited to the poppy, has increased three times in value, for a mou of good land with wheat as the spring crop gives an annual return of about $3 only, whereas the same mou put under poppy as its spring crop produces $10 or even $20. Also, though the cost of tillage is much greater for poppy than for wheat, the latter impoverishes the land for the summer harvest of rice or maize, while the fertiliser put in for opium enriches it for the next sowing.

Under such circumstances what is the would-be Christian farmer to do ? Not to grow poppy but only wheat and rice on land for which the owner demands the rent of opium land, makes all the difference between comfort and perhaps semi-starvation, not only for himself but for his family. Some of our people are devoted enough to bear the loss, though it is a daily cross. Others, and not a few, have gone back to opium growing even after baptism. It has been questioned by some whether we are justified in laying so heavy a burden on the consciences of our converts, but one has to remember that the Church is now, to all intents and purposes, the principal protestant against the abuse of this drug, and some firm

stand it must make, for it cannot afford to be invertebrate in a matter that affects the life of this nation, and indeed of itself.

Being young and inexperienced, I fifteen years ago established a Refuge for opium smokers. Youth and inexperience, like the goodwill of a business, are often important items in the ledger of progress. Would that they always stood on the same side of the page, and did not skip from column to column so readily! In this particular case they proved a distinct asset, for many churches were established in consequence, and a large number of people brought under the influence of that greatest of all Guides to Progress, the Gospel.

A man of education who had wasted his patrimony on the narcotic, and whose gaunt frame, dull eye, pallid face, and unwashed clothes proclaimed full plainly his degradation, called one day, and asked me to cure him. I told him I was inexperienced in this sort of work, but he was persistent in submitting himself to my tender mercies. Assured that faith was the best cure I urged him to prayer, and, in order to support his physical strength, dosed him with quinine as a tonic three times a day. He suffered, of course, but in ten days was free from his twenty years' thraldom, and being a man of strong will, and having given himself to God, he has remained free ever since. Others came about the same time, and soon it was necessary to appoint a native Christian, a man outspoken and blunt, but earnest in prayer, to take charge of the patients. Later, our premises became too small and a special set of sleeping rooms was erected, which were afterwards turned into our first hospital, as recorded in the preceding chapter. Our methods were distinctly Spartan, and in consequence some of the patients suffered two or three days of severe distress and nearly died on our hands, but, so far as we know, all went home cured. No record was kept after the first few months, but three or four hundred passed through our little refuge.

It was part of our method to impress on the patient, that unless he became truly converted there was little likelihood of his remaining free from re-enslavement. And the future history of the patients proved that our teaching was correct,

for unhappily nearly all of whom we afterwards received news went back to the drug. A few, however, became converts, and were very helpful in spreading the gospel.

I have told in Chapter IV. of the cure of some men from Crystal Lily, and how they were the means of opening up a very important work there, which has since been divided into two circuits. Alas! every one even of these went back to the drug. One of them set up as a curer of the enslaved, but soon himself fell back into its chains. He bitterly repented, and later cured himself again, but his health gave way, and he soon afterwards died, penitent and urging his sons to be faithful Christians. The other three were cured and re-cured, and of the two who still live, one continues to spend his hard-earned money three times a day in the "black-smoke house"! He attends services regularly, but neither our sternest rebukes nor our tenderest persuasions, though added to the earnest solicitations of his son who is a local preacher, have availed to make a man of him.

Of the number reclaimed in those days, about half a dozen became preachers or local preachers. Some of them afterwards fell away to their old habit, but others have remained firm and are still bearing faithful witness, amongst whom is the B.A. pastor mentioned in a previous chapter. As to the refuge, our method proved too drastic, or, rather, a method less rigorous was introduced by Chinese vendors, in the shape of tiny morphia pills. By the use of these a man could cure himself by degrees, so he was told, without any inconvenience, and without the necessity of leaving his home or his work for a ten days' imprisonment. That some found this method effective is quite true, but it is feared the majority added the vice of morphia-eating to that of opium-smoking, so that "the last state of that man was worse than the first." Our opium refuge died calmly and peacefully, nor was I sorry to be relieved of the labour and anxiety, as country work was opening up which took me much away from home.

Let it not be thought, however, that the work amongst opium-smokers has been allowed permanently to lapse. The advent of men with better qualifications meant the advent

of milder methods of treatment, and now the sufferings of the penitent are much mitigated. Nevertheless, it is a despair-provoking work, for, on the least provocation, most of these men fly straight back to the pipe. Have they a pain in the head, in the stomach, in the toe?—then, just a pipe to relieve it. Many of them do not wait for the actual pain, the mere possibility is enough; they are on the verge of it,—just a pipe as a preventive. Tropical climates are notably enervating; the Hindoo squatting on his lean hams, the Chinaman fast asleep on the parapet of a bridge, his closed eyes towards the blazing sun, the white-clad Englishman full stretch in his long cane chair, all tell the invertebrate condition of the Orient,—but what a feeling of lightness a whiff of the drug temporarily inspires in the devotee! All his pains and anticipations of pain are gone, the collapsing frame is strung together again,—to be followed, of course, by the gnawing of many fiends a few hours later, if no drug can be had; but at least there is a temporary heaven. No wonder the victims go back to their drug; no wonder they even try to secrete opium or morphia pills when they come in to be treated; no wonder they endeavour to sneak out of the gate at the onset of discomfort, or try to scale the walls at night, or even secretly open the gate and run off, leaving all they brought behind them, and—carrying off the hospital clothes!

Yet there are cases of great determination, and men who are willing to die rather than fail. These generally are men already converted and yearning to shake off the last of the devil's chains. One such declined to come into hospital, saying that if Christianity were true, then God could cure him in his own home. When the agony was on him and he rolled, bathed in sweat, upon the ground, his wife brought him a pipe begging him to find relief and save his life. This man was the last scion of a wealthy family, but three generations of opium-smoking had squandered all their possessions, and now his only pair of cotton trousers conspicuously indicated that a washing necessitated half a day in bed.

"Ah Ling's mother!" he said to his wife, when she proffered him the pipe, "If I take that pipe again, it will

not be long before I shall be selling the boys, and you also, to get more opium, If I am to die it is better I should die now. Take the pipe away."

He did not die but lived to be a preacher of the Gospel. He is a well-educated man and clever, but his opium-smoking years have left him physically inert. The churches he has been sent to, while liking the man, dislike his incorrigible laziness. Knowing this he has recently resigned, and taken over the control of a number of schools started by the gentry of his neighbourhood. We look with misgivings on his return to the society of his old comrades, and fear much they may yet drag him back into the blackness of night.

Another case of great determination is that of the son of a well-to-do old gentleman whose house I visited last month. Though eighty years of age the old man is still able to walk over twenty miles a day. His son, a man of forty-five, heard the gospel a few years ago, and decided to become a Christian and cut off his opium. He was on his way to the city to be cured, when he met an old friend who was an attender at our services. This friend, being engaged in curing opium-smokers, induced him to go to his house for that purpose. When the cure was nearly complete, suddenly, without warning, the poor fellow passed away to where there are no more opium allurements. His relatives naturally put down his death to the treatment, and were on the point of starting —a couple of hundred strong—to destroy the friend's house, when the old father succeeded in dissuading them.

This loss was a great grief to me, for I had many talks with the deceased man, who spent some time here learning the rudiments of Christianity, and whose influence would certainly have opened our way into a new district. Just when this opening, by this untoward circumstance, seemed closed, to my surprise and pleasure I received a visit from the octogenarian father. Mourning with him his grievous loss, he answered calmly and with dignity, " It is the will of God." To my even greater astonishment, he begged that we would send a preacher to his home, to hold weekly services for his household and neighbours, and though our entry seemed unpropitious I gladly accepted the old man's invitation.

Two years passed, and his elder grandson, who in the

meantime had come under the influence of our preaching, visited the city, and desired also to be cured of the opium habit. Both father and son were well-built, broad-shouldered men, while the sturdy old grandfather had been a well-known pugilist in his day. The stalwart appearance of the young man, who was just over thirty, argued everything in his favour, and we saw no reason why he should not be treated, though his wife for months had refused to allow him to come, lest he, too, should die like his father. At last she tearfully yielded and he came, was treated and cured by Dr Hogg.

At the time I was holding a Bible class for local preachers, and this man very ardently longed to join us. He was sufficiently recovered to do so before our session was half over, but being desirous of relieving his wife's anxiety, he decided that his first duty was to go home and show himself to her, before satisfying his desire to meet in our class. He accordingly set off, and made the journey, which took him two long days. Great were the rejoicings at home, but he would not stay, and immediately set out on the two days' return journey to be present at our class. Most attentive and intelligent was he, for, having received a fair education, he was able to follow the instruction given with profit.

Never shall I forget the fatal night three or four days after his arrival. The day had been insufferably oppressive, the air was laden with warm moisture, the clouds hung low, yet the sun pierced through with shafts of fire, perspiration lay thick on everybody's brow, and one would have given much for a breath of wind. Heavy had been the countenances of the members of my class, many the struggles to keep the attention fixed, and with none more so than with our ex-opium smoker. Night came, still with the same unbreathable air. The young men lay down to sleep in the rooms provided, the ex-opium smoker in the same room with two others, who themselves had formerly been in bondage to the habit. They thought he fell asleep, for his breathing was heavy, but they themselves were still wakeful. Before long, however, his heavy breathing suddenly ceased ; hearing no sound and becoming suspicious, one of them called to him without receiving an answer. They lit the lamp and came

to his side: his breathing had completely stopped and he lay there unconscious, nor did their best efforts arouse him. In great trepidation they ran across the road and roused me, and along with the Doctor I hastened to his bedside. Alas! he was gone beyond recall.

How were we to break the news to the old grandfather! His only son gone, his grandson gone, and now nothing left but a young grandson, a mere boy far from robust. And how were we to break the news to the poor wife, who had pleaded with tears that he would not give up the habit, and whose premonitions had been only too fully realised!

Special messengers were sent; his relatives came, glum, dour, dark-visaged. They took away the poor body, and our hearts were sore. Now at last our little work at Wu-Yoa was surely at an end, and our anticipations only coincided with the words of a letter then written me by our native pastor "Summer," that this second catastrophe had certainly dealt the death-blow to our work there. But no, before many days were past the brave, trusting old man sent up a pleading message that now, above all, we would not leave them to their fate, that now, especially, if the Gospel were to be made known, a preacher was regularly required, and we thanked God for such faith.

Some months afterwards I met the fine old man at Rainbow Bridge, to which he had walked fifteen miles over the mountains to see me. He again urged their needs, and thanked me earnestly for all my kindness to his son and grandson, insisting at the same time, in recouping me for expense to which I had been put, in providing the coffin and cerements for his grandson. "My wife died suddenly in like manner," he said, "long before we knew anything about Christianity. It is the will of God, and not a visitation, for our becoming Christians as some would have us believe." Soon after this he was at his own request baptised, and last month the heart-broken widow, though for long she had resisted and resented us, spoke gently and submissively to my wife when we met her for the first time, on our visit to this district.

Such is some of the shade and shine of Opium work. The blight of a great curse is on this land, which is wilting under its fierce and destroying greed. Sad we are as we gaze over

the gorgeous fields, gaudy with their painted Delilah charms, that end as with her in blinded vision and tottering pillars of home and happiness. Sad we are that our beloved land, however unintentionally, should have had so melancholy a part in the degradation of millions of this people, a part, when the sum of earthly misery is finally added up, that will strike remorse to the hearts of those who have profited thereby, a remorse greater even than that of those who made their wealth by the accursed slave trade.

At this late hour what can England do ? There is but one reply for honourable men. Stop the trade. Stop the growth in India, save for medicinal purposes. Stop its transport in British ships. But other nations will then carry it ! Where would they obtain it to carry ? Other places would grow it. Let them ! We have had our fill of shame. Oh ! Christian England ! What would Pagan Japan do ?

XII

EDUCATIONAL

"Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."

Until the present century China followed the old learning, and resolutely turned her face from modern teaching. But during the closing decade of the last century a voice was heard in the wilderness, crying with ever increasing persistency, for something more vitalising than the dead things of the past. Seven years ago the cry intensified and penetrated to the "Dragon Throne" with imperious demand. The youthful Emperor heard and, weak though his party was, bravely responded, with the result that he found himself imprisoned by the Empress Dowager and her supporters, and his power suspended. Nevertheless the Voice would not be silenced. Neither decapitation nor torture could stifle it, for the headless bodies of the seven young "martyrs" still cried aloud from the ground. At last even the Empress Dowager, the would-be destroyer of the Occident and all its works, has been compelled to listen and respond.

Though the Voice would probably disclaim the fact, the silent but impelling Power behind it was Christianity. For fifty years missionaries had been founding schools and colleges, and had been publishing books, wisely and otherwisely, but always enlightening. Fifteen years ago a Society with a clumsy name, "The Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge amongst the Chinese," was formed, and it has played a powerful part in unconsciously training the Voice to cry. Its illuminating publications have been borne to the confines of the Empire. In palace, yamen, college, and home, its books and its monthly magazines have been read with avidity, by those who saw the peril of

their fatherland, and recognised that the eagles were gathered only because the giant carcase was itself on the point of disintegration.

And the Voice cried with a loud cry, hardly knowing why or for what it cried. And the cry was heard, could not but be heard, for though the Voice was the Voice of the Orient, the lungs were the lungs of the West. The cry has been heard, and the comatose giant is on his feet, still rubbing his eyes, wondering where he is and what has awakened him, but on his feet he is, no longer unconscious with the sleeping sickness of death.

The Government Colleges throughout the Empire are undergoing revision. Universities have already been established, an entire change of curriculum is taking place, and the whole stream of education is being diverted from the old, narrow channel into one deeper and broader. The dead level is being changed for a steeper gradient, and though there are in the rushing river rocks that were not found in the stagnant canal, rocks never yet stopped a flowing stream. Many is the river that, midway to its outlet is sucked dry by the level sands ; even Jordan's stream never reaches the free and open main, but is swallowed up by the dead waters of Asphalites. Far better the rugged rocks of Knowledge than the arid desert of platitude, into which this giant has been draining his mental energy for ages past.

Often had the Voice called and called in vain, for the giant rolled over once more, in his death-like slumber murmuring curses against the disturber. But the year 1900, the year of his deepest slumber, became also the year of his rudest awakening. Then, the seven nations united their voices into a truly " horrid din," and the aroused giant was fain to discover that the despised barbarian possessed something he himself lacked,—even if it were only strength of lung to shout " Sheo," " Learn," from the midst of a roar of,—was it only cannon, or was it Heaven's insistent Thunder !

Great was the step forward taken by Dr Alexander Williamson of the Scotch United Presbyterian Mission, when in his old age he left the ordinary tenor of a missionary's life to-do a greater mission work in establishing the Society above-named, now known as the Christian Literature Society.

Well was it also for China, when Dr Faber of the German Rhenish Mission joined him, and left preaching with his lips to a few, for more effective preaching with his cyclopædic pen to the many; when also Dr Young J. Allen, of the American Southern Methodist Mission, left the teaching of his large school of Chinese youths, to join in teaching a vaster school of adult educated Chinese with his powerful Universal Magazine; when, later, on the death of Dr Williamson, Dr Timothy Richard, of the English Baptist Mission, not knowing whither he went, was led forth by the Great Ordainer, from the superintendence of the important work he had founded in Shansi, to the organisation and extension of this Society's greater work. Now, responsive to its call, the Church Missionary Society, the London Mission, the Wesleyan Mission, the China Inland Mission, the Canadian Presbyterian, and other Missions have each segregated a man, to assist in giving to the Chinese that light on the heavens and the earth, which has become visible to man through Him Who is the Light of both Heaven and Earth, and without Whom the great Riddle of the Universe remains unsolved.

Great also has been the work of the Christian Colleges scattered throughout the Empire, and short-sighted the policy of those Missions which were only prepared to give part, and not all, that lay within their power. If the Missionary Professor had not been toiling quietly and patiently through long years of self-denial, then might the Literature Society have vainly shouted, even with throat of brass. If the Missionary Educationalist had not prepared a regiment of teachers, all too few, alas, for the work for which they are now feverishly sought, then might the throat of brass have burst for any good it would have done. But the toil of the Missionary Teacher,—mostly from America and not from England,—has been a toil of ploughing and sowing in virgin soil, and the first crop is being heavily reaped.

From whence are the National Colleges to obtain teachers for their "modern side," save from the Mission Schools, and on what model is the native effort after a reformed education to be shaped, save on that of the existing Christian Colleges? These are the only models in China. Consequently, to these more applications for native teachers and directors have been

made than could be satisfied. Some of those sent out are Christians, and all have been too much accustomed to the luxury of the Christian Sabbath to give it up. So, on joining the Government Schools, they have demanded this one day's rest in seven, nor have they demanded in vain, for the Sunday, an unheard-of institution ten years ago, is now, marvel of marvels, a recognised day of rest in educational circles throughout China. Herein we have the second step in the adoption of the Sabbath by this country, the first having long ago been taken by the poor and needy, who gave their faithful hearts and humble lives to Christ, when to observe the Sabbath meant loss of a day's wages, and often physical deprivation.

Not content with this, in a number of places, north and south,—and most remarkable of all, the Imperial Capital included,—numbers of idols have been pulled down from their ancient seats, and removed or destroyed, in order that the purged temples might be transformed into schoolrooms for Higher Education. Our eyes indeed see wondrous sights, and our ears hear wondrous tidings.

Referring to our educational and general work in Wenchow, a lady well acquainted with mission work elsewhere, was good enough to say a short time ago, " What has struck me in the methods of your Mission is, that you first got your work together, and erected your buildings afterwards." It had not occurred to us that there was any other sensible plan, or we might have desired to adopt it ! Not that such a desire would have been any use, for, financially, we have never suffered temptation greater than we were able to bear. Hence, we can take no credit for not erecting big establishments first, and trying to fill them afterwards. Our method was the accident of our indigence, but the so-called " flukes " of life often add more to the score than the best planned strokes.

Our educational work in Wenchow began with very small things. A school of half a score small boys, whose parents braved obloquy and sent them to us, because there were no fees to pay ; a little schoolmaster simple and mild ; a small outbuilding, and a few stools and tables,—such was our earliest outfit, and such it remained for twenty years. Some

of the boys are now making good incomes far away from Wenchow, and will return in years to come; moreover, as the years grow on them, most of them will want that about which they learnt as children, but which the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of silver have temporarily eclipsed.

What those boys learnt they learnt after the old fashion. Each sat perched high up on his little stool, dangling little legs through which pins and needles often coursed gaily. Lifting his shrill voice, he shouted on to the cylinder of his own and everybody else's memory, the lesson appointed him to learn. His own, and the shouts of his competitor's in vocal energy, were punctuated at short intervals by sharp corrections from the little schoolmaster. How the master discriminated between the various voices, books, chapters, verses and words of his score or more pupils always puzzled me. Of class teaching, there was none in all China, until introduced by missionaries. All was individual teaching, which, indeed, has many advantages for the few, when it does not also mean individual neglect, as is often the case in Chinese schools.

The Child's Primer, or "Ignorant Enquirer," was the first book put into the scholar's hands, and through its dreary pages he stumbled, keeping his feet as best as he could, aided by many a resounding blow on knuckles or head from the benevolent old master's ferule. The ferule was square and hard, and with it he toughened his own tender heart, and his scholars' tender heads for the rough warfare of life. If he raised no other at least he sent them away with an enlarged bump of reverence. The boy's sole duty was to learn his book by rote, so as to recognise the mere names of the characters. Later, if he remained long enough, he was taught the meaning of each character, much as an English boy learns and repeats his Latin vocabulary, but knows not how to use it.

This Primer is sometimes known as the Small History, for it treats of the history of the world, namely China, from the very beginning. Its opening phrases are, "Before the primordial elements were disentangled, all was one chaotic vapour (ether). The clear and the turbid began to separate, and the upper and the lower to take their respective places.

The light and clear became heaven, the heavy and turbid became the earth. Between the two came man, and all the myriads of (living) things, but man was born to be the wisest among them. His physical nature had desires, and what he could not otherwise obtain he fought for, the strong wrestled with each other for mastery, and the people suffered oppression. Without the establishment of a Prince, how could the people obtain rest? So heaven produced Fu-she, the first who came forth to rule the earth. He it was who discovered the divining lines, and moreover invented writing."

Here follows a brief account of the mythological period, lasting "seventeen thousand years," and then comes more or less valid history of the various dynasties, from B.C. 3000 to the present times. The little book contains in all less than a thousand words, many of which are very complicated, and, as the book is in rhyme, and the historical allusions many, it requires a man of education to understand it. There is little meat on these bones for a child of five; hence it is deemed enough that he read the letters, without attempting to "learn and inwardly digest" the meaning.

As an incentive to filial piety, which is *the* definite article in the Chinaman's religion, the top of each page is adorned with a crude sketch, showing an instance of filial devotion. Here is a picture of the youth whose parents could not afford a mosquito curtain, and who therefore every evening used to strip himself naked, lie on his parents' bed, and tempt the greedy mosquitoes to gorge themselves on his more enticing flesh, so that his parents might rest in peace. On another page is a print of a boy whose mother was ill and needed some fish; but it was winter, and the water covered with thick ice. He had no firewood to thaw a hole, and his mother must have fish; so he placed his own naked body on the ice, and there remained until a hole was thawed through; whereupon a fish, filled with admiration for such piety, sacrificed itself by jumping out of the hole, and allowing itself to be unresistingly captured. On yet another page is shown how a certain youth, finding that human flesh was a necessary ingredient in a dose of medicine ordered for his parent, immediately supplied it from his own body, and, let me add, I have met a man who actually did this for his

parents. With such gruesome incentives to filial piety (instead of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"!), the Chinese youth is encouraged in the way of righteousness.

His first efforts to write, with hand guided by the benevolent old master, consisted of the three words, "One," 一 "Great," 大, "Man," 人. These, being very simple characters, were easy to learn. They, moreover, contained within them much to fire the ambition of the infant mind; for might not this unwashed, uncombed, ink-begrimed, snuffling specimen of goodness-knows-what some fine day become "A great Man," with eight bearers to his palanquin, and a crowd of lictors, bodyguards and horsemen, if only he persevered in the paths of learning!

The next book to be tackled was the Thousand Character Classic, in which he steadily plodded his way through more vocabulary. This Classic is also in rhyme, and the thousand characters in it are never once repeated, whereby of course the meaning is considerably strained. Some accounts say that its compiler "did the task in a single night, under the fear of condign punishment if he failed, and the mental exertion was so great as to turn his hair white."

Later followed the book "Divine (or clever) Youths," in which the value of diligence is held up in extremely difficult rhyme. The Hundred Surnames, a list of the "Hundred Clans" into which China is supposed to be divided, came next, or the Trimetrical Classic, or some other introductory book. Finally the scholar reached the Ultima Thule of learning, and was brought face to face with the great Sage himself, whose words and conduct, whose dress and food, were now to be his mental pabulum for the rest of his student days.

"Great is Confucius," and no doubt the pupil has sufficient reason to think so, as he daily plods his weary way through the dull pages, pages without adventure, without excitement, without anything to add one single beat to the sluggish pulse, or bring a smile to the lip, or a tear to the eye, for did not Confucius carefully avoid all talk of "marvels, powers, disturbances, spirits"?

Herein is no walking on the sea, no raising of the widow's

son, no walking on the waters, no tears and dishevelled hair and box of ointment, no parable of Prodigal Son, no Judas, no Peter, no Pilate, no Cross,—and no Crown. The Master wore the fur robe of his undress long, with the right sleeve short. The Master required his sleeping dress to be half as long again as his body. Over lamb's fur he wore a garment of black, over fawn's fur one of white, and over fox's fur one of yellow. He did not eat meat which was improperly cut, nor that which was served without its proper sauce. It was only in wine that he laid down no limit for himself, but he did not allow himself to be confused by it. He always ate ginger with his meals. When he passed the palace of his prince, his countenance appeared to change, his legs to bend under him, and his words came as if he had hardly breath to utter them. The Master said, If the Scholar be not grave he will not be respected and his learning will not be solid; hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles; have no friends not equal to yourself; when you have faults, do not fear to abandon them. The superior man thinks of virtue, the small man thinks of comfort. The superior man is conversant with righteousness, the little man with gain. All of it good, prosaic, deadly dull;—"Thou shalt love thy friend and ignore thine enemy,"—as if such a man could have blood in his veins, or fire in his life, could have felt the woes of mankind, or wept tears of agony over its sins!

Nevertheless, let us not fail to remember what reason we have to be thankful that Chinese school books, viewed at any rate from the standpoint of morals, unlike the Classics of Greece and Rome, need no expurgation before they can be put into the hands of the schoolboy. Nor is the system of memorising altogether without its compensations. To the forgetful Englishman the amount the native student can commit to memory is cause for envy; for instance:—

Two schoolboys of fifteen years of age, who for a short period had been receiving Scripture lessons from a Pastor, were one day brought into my study, set down back to back at a distance from each other, and told to be ready. The Pastor handed me the book they were to recite, which I found to be a copy of St John's Gospel. I gave the word to one of them to begin, and, at racehorse speed, he set off

with a rush through the first chapter, while I breathlessly raced down the line of characters after him. Recovering my wind as he approached the end of the chapter, I panted out to the other boy to begin the second. Starting off as if shot, he won by a neck. I instantly commenced the first boy on the third chapter, and, after he had run on into the fourth, started the second boy as soon as I could get the curb on. Thus we galloped through the whole gospel, or, rather, I occasionally jumped a page, and started them off with a dozen words taken haphazard from the middle of the next. They were practically word perfect, and to me, who, as a boy, had received a prize for stumbling through the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, with all too numerous promptings, it was an amazing performance. I made the boys happy with a dollar apiece, and felt as if they deserved a University degree!

The youthful scholar, having reached the time for construing what he had spent so many years in memorising, was now taught the meaning of each phrase and required to repeat that meaning when next he came up for a lesson. His handwriting was at last taking shape, and, as he had now decided to enter for a degree at the National Examinations, when an Imperially-appointed Literary Chancellor would come to the county, his Master set him theme after theme for essay writing. According to the rigid rules of the Chinese "eight-legged" essay he must write out his treatise, a sort of sermon with its formal interpretation, proposition, introduction, contextual connection, division, quotation, illustration, application and conclusion.

Moreover, he must learn by heart all the other Confucian Classics, namely the Four Books (Analects, Great Learning, Golden Mean, and Mencius). He must also read and memorise the Five Canons edited by Confucius himself, namely, the Ancient History of China, the Spring and Autumn Annuals, the Ancient Poets, the Ritual, and the Book of Divination. He must read the commentaries of Chufutsz on some of these books, and, if possible, memorise them also. For when he entered the examination shed, he knew not what fragment of a verse or sentence might be chipped off for him to masticate. It was much as if a theological class were to

have, say, the words, "The sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them," or "Old shoes and clouted upon their feet," or, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile," given to it, and, without any further aid to memory, being instructed to write a sermon, in a given stilted style, placing the text in proper setting with its context, and then drawing lessons from text and context.

Such was the sole qualification required under the old regime for the first, or B.A. degree. The second and third degrees were like it, plus the addition of verse-making. No mathematics, no science, no modern history, and decidedly no barbarian tongues. The system was not altogether valueless, any more than an English University pass in Classics is valueless; indeed in many respects the two systems bore a strong resemblance, with balance of advantage in favour of the Chinaman, for his education was of living and immediate use throughout the whole Empire, whereas that of his English compeer was dead and generally cast aside on leaving the University.

Moreover, the Chinese degree was the more difficult to obtain, seeing that, as in the case of our own Civil Service Examination, which theoretically it resembled in its objective, there was a fixed limit in the number of passes. By this regulation, out of three or four thousand entries in this county of Wenchow, only a few over a hundred could graduate in any one year, and men grew grey-headed trying in vain to obtain a pass. Indeed occasionally three generations of the same family have sat in one Examination shed at the same time.

At the great Triennial Provincial Examination, for which five to ten thousand graduates have hitherto been accustomed to assemble for the second or M.A. degree, the number of passes was again limited to a similar figure. So highly prized was this sign and seal of learning, that many spent a month or more on the road to the Provincial Capital, and suffered incredible discomforts both in and out of the Examination Hall, wherein days of tropic heat or nights of deadly cold had to be passed penned in a cell six feet by four, too short for a man to lie down at full length, and wide open at one end to every kind of weather.

All this has changed since the year 1900. The old-time essay with its firstly, secondly, thirdly, was the first to abdicate from its eight-century-old throne, and for the first degree the student was granted permission to form his own style of thesis. The theme need no longer be limited to the Classics, but might wander anywhere between the bowels of the earth and the light of the remotest star, even further; and might soar from the treatment of parents to the ruling of a universe. Modern languages (English especially), mathematics, theoretical science, history, geography, all found a place in the new list of subjects spread before the examinee, and the Literary Chancellor, himself ignorant of these topics, was driven to take around with him a band of assistant examiners at whom ten years ago he would have elevated his nose, had it been possible to raise so disdainful an organ any further.

For was it not such men as these degenerate assistants who had been the means of overthrowing the cultured essay and the classic verse, and of substituting for them the amorphic modern newspaper article! Was it not they who had introduced babarian tongues,—truly barbarian the barbarian himself thought as he tried to recognise them—and vulgar figures, fit only for a tradesman's bookkeeper; and mechanics, fit teaching for the grimy smith; and chemistry, fit for nobody with a nose, except perhaps a dyer, or—a sanitary inspector, he would have added, had he ever heard of such a being! What was His High Mightiness here for? To examine smiths and tradesmen? Was this learning? Shades of Confucius! To what was the country coming? Nevertheless he did his duty as he saw it, which was to be as heavy a clog as possible on the wheels of this downgrade movement.

Next year came along a Chancellor of different mould, whose hawklike beak was stridden by a pair of foreign spectacles through which he looked for ideas even more than for style, and who laid greater stress on the weight of the Dogstar, or the best way of defending the coast, than on the follies and fancies to be drawn in strict essay form, from the statement that "the music of Shau should have its accompanying pantomimes." He preferred enlightenment on bimetallism to the inanities of a score of antithetical lines, whose chief merit was their balance and rhyme.

Such was the condition of education when I commenced to pen this description a few months ago. It was marked by a flux and reflux which became the puzzle of the educationalist, to whom also the two months wasted during the spring and autumn terms through the absence of half his pupils at these antiquated examinations, was a constant irritation. The present month, September 1905, has, however, seen the issue of a new Edict which abolishes these great examinations from and after 1906, substituting College and University examinations in their place, and ordering the definition of a national curriculum, and the selection of appropriate text books. Whether this change is final time will show, but the chances are strongly in its favour. Educationally China is in the experimental stage, and, though the situation presents many irksome features, it contains within it germs of a most hopeful character, which may generate influences great, abiding, and universal.

In Wenchow we were driven by force of circumstances to adopt a system of higher education. A spirit of dissatisfaction with the old regime was abroad, accompanied by a half-ashamed turning of the eye towards the foreign missionary for help, so in 1897 we yielded to the inevitable and decided to make a start. The principal factor inducing us to do so was the advent of a new boys' schoolmaster, who had picked up some arithmetic and a little algebra and geometry in Shanghai. My honoured friend, Dr John Fryer, amongst others, had done excellent pioneer work in translating educational books, which were the only source of information for non-collegiate Chinese students; yet so rapid a change has come over the educational world that it is difficult to realise that ten years ago our present-day text-books simply did not exist, almost every Missionary Professor having to translate his own.

Our new acquisition with the smattering of Western knowledge, was put in charge of our new High School, which consisted of a score of youths, who all paid for the new education such fees as had not before been paid in Wenchow. We taught English for an extra fee, my colleague, the Rev. W. R. Stobie, kindly taking charge of this department. A native Classical master was engaged, and the native with

the smattering did the rest. Progress was made, and the number of students so increased that our small premises became overcrowded and insanitary. We then became mortgagees with possession of an old, very dirty, but roomy Chinese house. This was cleaned and repaired, and in time our score of students grew to fifty. From Dr Mateer's College, eight hundred miles to the north, we obtained a Christian Mathematics Master. A devoted young fellow he was, and to this day Mr Wang's influence is felt in our College. Three years of Wenchow unfortunately proved too much for his northern constitution; he broke down in health, and was compelled to go back to his own dry and bracing climate. Happily this did not occur until he had taught a Christian youth, son of a good family, sufficient knowledge to fill his place, and this young man has trained others, who are now able to take charge of the mathematics department.

We also decided to obtain a first rate Classics Master, and succeeded in engaging one of the ablest scholars in the county. He is still with us, and honoured both himself and our Institution two years ago, by taking his M.A. degree. Chinese Language and Literature has been made the chief item in our syllabus, as we do not deem it credible to a Mission College that its students should leave with a knowledge of many other things, but ignorant of their own language.

In 1899 the pastoral work of the Mission becoming too great for Mr Stobbie and myself, an additional missionary was sought, and the Rev. A. H. Sharman sent out. Still we were short-handed, and the growing needs of the College called for a specially trained master. Consequently, in 1902, Mr T. W. Chapman, M.Sc., joined us, and he is worthily filling this very responsible post.

Our mortgaged house was never well suited to our needs, and the increasing number of students, lack of sleeping accommodation and class-rooms, and the necessity for more light and air, urged the expediency of new and convenient premises. A friend generously offered £500 towards such a building; Mrs Soothill, who was in England, succeeded in raising £800 more, the committee also made a grant towards the Principal's house, and our present commodious College is the outcome. Herein are bedrooms for ninety

OUR COLLEGE

students, masters' rooms, class-rooms, chapel, reception and dining halls, and the usual outhouses.[1] The Principal's house adjoins the College, being in immediate contact therewith for ease of supervision whether by day or by night.

Mr Chapman is training his own staff as rapidly as possible, in order that the day of self-support may the more speedily dawn upon us. The cost to the Mission for 1906 is estimated at something less than £50, and there is a fair prospect of 1907 seeing the College self-sustaining, the Principal's salary of course apart.

Our local record in the public examinations surpasses that of any Official College hereabouts. Last year eight of our students took their degree, as also did a boy of fourteen from our elementary school, and one young man passed into the Peking University. What we look and work for, however, is something higher than examination records. While we desire to turn out men well-appointed mentally, much more do we desire to see them leave us with a higher moral equipment than is usual in the native schools, and best of all with a soul awakened, and a conscience enlightened, for the spiritual battle of life. Much therefore though we dislike compulsion, we have felt it our duty to make a rule that all students attend prayers daily, and that all resident masters and students attend College service once on Sundays; attendance at other services is left quite optional. The senior classes take a book of the New Testament as part of their English course, and at the Sunday afternoon service which Mr Chapman has instituted it is a delight to see their reverence and attention. We are also commencing meetings with a view to affiliation with the Collegiate Y.M.C.A., hoping thereby to bring an even greater influence to bear on the moral and spiritual character of our young men. There are no false pretences about the College. It is definitely a Christian institution, everybody knows it to be such, and yet we have representatives from the principal Yamens, and from some of the best non-Christian homes in the county.

A number of our students have taken excellent and lucra-

[1] 1906 has opened with 200 students, of whom 40 are day pupils, 40 have had to be provided with outside accommodation, and 120 crowded into the College dormitories.

tive situations as schoolmasters, and in the customs and postal services, but while we rejoice over these, much greater is our joy over those who have gone out as preachers into our churches, and as teachers into our own schools. Three of our best young preachers have had training here which has made them thoughtful, intelligent and earnest, and which has given them an unquestioned advantage over most of their fellow-preachers.

The college would have repaid its cost if only those who have already been influenced and helped were counted, but what of the future that lies before it? From this and other such Colleges, is to spring a race of men, who shall be known for their integrity and sincerity, virtues rare in this country of moral decrepitude; men who, disdaining to kneel before stocks and stones, will not rest till it be possible to hold any office in the land, without degrading it by the idolatry which at present is its necessary concomitant; men who will some day seek the face of the noblest Man the earth has seen, and recognise in Him the Son of God, the Divine Saviour. From such Colleges are to come men who, holding the greatest gain to be the winning of immortal souls, shall fill this country with the power of a new and immortal life. From such Colleges, indeed, we look for a host, intellectual and earnest, who will lay hold of the next generation, purge it of idolatry and superstition, and lift it into mental and spiritual liberty.

Already the influence of the new College on our City Elementary School has been most marked. From the thirty pupils which had been its average for more than twenty years, the numbers, at one bound, sprang to over two hundred the year after the new College was opened. And though Official Elementary schools have since been opened, our numbers have increased, under Mr Sharman's supervision, to over three hundred, thus forming by far the largest school in this county, if not in this province. No longer do the boys howl out the ancient books at the top of their lusty voices, for the shouting of three hundred boys, in confined quarters, might produce a similar result on our school walls to that which the shouting of Israel did on those of Jericho.

The course of study has also been changed, improved Chinese educational books have been adopted, arithmetic

OUR STUDENTS, 1906

has been introduced, history also and geography, scripture classes are held daily, the romanised New Testament being taught as well as the character version, and there is a select class in elementary English, which pays special fees for the help it obtains from one of the College students. Once a week Mr Sharman holds a C.E.S., at which over a hundred of the boys are voluntarily present, many of them from pagan homes. Every Sunday, also, the whole school is present at morning service in our City Church.

When it is borne in mind that in this city, to say nothing of the immense number of children in the six other cities, and thousands of villages in this county, there are twenty thousand children, who ought to be at school, the need for the Christian schoolmaster is all too manifest. Given the man and the means, what is to hinder the collecting of all these Wenchow children into Christian schools, and the slaying of idolatry in this city in one generation! The victory of Japan over Russia has aroused in China an ardent desire to regain her lost prestige, and Chinese students have been pouring into Japan, where there now are eight thousand of them, and Japanese professors are beginning to come into this. Whatever virtues these men possess,—and we would be the last to minimise them,—their influence is definitely not Christian, indeed is often a direct hindrance to Christian progress, for Huxley and Spencer are greater in their eyes than Jesus Christ. Why will not Christian England awake to a sense of its dangers, responsibilities and privileges? When will it arouse itself to lay hold of the rising generation in pagan lands, and, from their early years, imbue them with love for Him, who was the Highest Educator the world has known or can know?

XIII

BIBLE TRANSLATION

"That thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things which thou wast taught by word of mouth."

A MISSIONARY may do without many things he ought to have, but he cannot long do without a translation into the language of his people, of the record of his Master's Life and Teaching. Lacking this, his preaching, while temporarily effective, will fail in permanence. The Apostles themselves soon discovered that oral teaching alone was insufficient for accuracy. Memory is treacherous and imagination vivid. Oral tradition soon becomes floral tradition, and fact becomes hidden beneath the poppy flowers of fancy. Hence the Apostles were early led, probably by this same experience of human obliquity, to commit those things to writing, which were necessary for the faith and morals of their own and future generations.

In like manner, the present-day missionary, who is destitute of the Word of God in the words of his people, will fail to keep them in the Way of God, which is the Way of Life. Such is the experience of history; for the withholding of the written Word has ever resulted in a degenerate Church and an ignoble clergy.

Nor, just as Dr Wells Williams has pointed out, has the Church in China escaped this fate, for as the founders founded so has it grown. Ricci, the great Roman pioneer, is depicted in admirable language by Abbé Huc as a man erudite, polished, and of unique diplomatic ability. One arises from a perusal of the Abbé's pages with a warm admiration for this great pioneer's intellectual gifts and undaunted courage; but not all his co-workers held him in such high esteem, for a priest of his own Communion has said of him, " Being more

of a politician than a theologian, he discovered the secret of remaining peacefully in China. The kings found him a man full of complaisance; the pagans a minister who accommodated himself to their superstitions; the mandarins a polite courtier skilled in all the trickery of courts; and the devil a faithful servant, who, far from destroying, established his reign among the heathen, and even extended it to the Christians. He preached in China the religion of Christ according to his own fancy; that is to say, he disfigured it by a faithful mixture of pagan superstitions, adopting the sacrifices offered to Confucius and ancestors, and teaching the Christians to assist and co-operate at the worship of idols, provided they only addressed their devotions to a cross covered with flowers, or secretly attached to one of the candles which were lighted in the temples of the false gods."

Dr Morrison, on the other hand, when sent to China, found in his letter of instructions the following words:— "Perhaps you may have the honour of forming a Chinese dictionary more comprehensive and correct than any preceding one, or the *still greater honour* of translating the Sacred Scriptures into a language spoken by a third part of the human race."

Ricci founded the Roman Church in China, withholding the Bible from his people, and as he founded, so, despite the noble self-sacrificing labours [1] of humbler apostles, has it continued to grow. Morrison, on the other hand, early translated the Scriptures into Chinese, and since his day the Bible has been the foundation Rock of Protestant theology and teaching in China, even as it is in Protestant Europe. From its records this Church of the Bible daily draws life and strength,—a strength spiritual with which it soars above the contamination of intrigue and craftiness, leaving diplomacy and its own future in the hands of the Great Diplomatist of the Universe.

During the first decade of the nineteenth century, while Morrison was still studying the languages, Dr Marshman,—

[1] In Wenchow for some years back we have been on terms of mutual friendliness with the French priests, for whose honesty of purpose and zealous labours I have a sincere respect.

one of the famous trio, Carey, Marshman, and Ward,— became acquainted with an American born in China and possessed of a knowledge of its written language. This man, John Lassar, he employed to translate the Scriptures into Chinese character, and during the year 1810 succeeded in publishing the Gospel of St Matthew. Nevertheless it fell to the lot of Dr Morrison, in the year 1814, seven years after his arrival, to fulfil the duty imposed upon him in his letter of instructions, by publishing the first complete translation of the New Testament in the Chinese language. This was a very noble record ; for with all the aids that to-day exist, few men in so short a time acquire a sufficient knowledge of the classical language to read it easily, much less translate into it. This record was equalled nine years later by the publication, with the aid of his colleague William Milne, of the whole Bible. Perhaps none can appreciate the greatness of this colossal work so highly as the man who himself has experienced the toil and difficulty of translating the Scriptures into Chinese, even though his labour has been immensely lightened by the travail of Morrison, his contemporaries, and successors.

It is needless to say that a one-man version, however excellent, can rarely be permanent ; much less is this possible with a pioneer translation. Dr Morrison himself recognised the imperfection of his work, but it fell to the lot of others to bring out a revision, first of the New Testament in 1837, again in 1850 ; and afterwards of the Old Testament in 1854.

Such versions were all in the classical (Wen-li) language, the literary form of the educated and not understood by the common people. Wen-li is the dead language of China, and stands in similar relationship to the speech of everyday life that Latin stood to the vernaculars of mediæval Europe. But there is one important difference, for whereas the mediæval scholar might talk Latin with his compeers and be understood, so terse is Wen-li that prolonged conversation in it is unknown and well-nigh impossible.

For fifty years this Wen-li Bible was the only version in the hands of the people. What the Vulgate was to mediæval Europe such was this translation to the Chinese Church,— a book for the educated and not for the common people,

DR. MORRISON AND HIS TRANSLATORS

who it must always be borne in mind, now as well as then vastly outnumber the educated classes.

In 1857 Dr Medhurst took another important step forward by employing a native scholar to render the Wen-li version into Mandarin, the official language, which is the common speech of two-thirds of the population. This soon led to the appointment of a committee, which in 1872 published what has since become the most popular edition in the empire, being known as the Peking mandarin version. Two years later the Old Testament was added.

This mandarin version, published in Chinese character, while indeed " common " in the eyes of the Chinese scholar, and despised by him accordingly, has been a great power in the land, and is destined to have a revolutionary influence on the literature of the land. For, just as the Bible in English and in German gave birth to the noble literature of both those countries; and as the written languages of several European and Oriental nations have been invented solely for the sake of translating the Scriptures, so this mandarin version has laid the foundation for a new and simpler literature which, there is reason to anticipate, will some day relegate classical Chinese to the repose of the Universities of the future, just as has occurred in the case of Latin in Europe. Already this version has begun to bring forth literary fruit, for newspapers and magazines have lately appeared in Mandarin, a language which can be written in Chinese characters as it is spoken, or, to be more accurate, can be spoken intelligibly as it is written.

One fault which both the above-mentioned renderings have shared more or less in common is, that being translated chiefly for the critical unbeliever, verbal accuracy was somewhat sacrificed to chasteness of style. Not that anyone would be led into heresy by their contents, for within their covers any devout reader could not fail to find the Way of Life clearly set forth. Nevertheless, to the missionary who has chosen a text in his English version and drafted out his sermon, it is not helpful, on ascending the pulpit and opening his Chinese Testament, to find that his text does not fit his sermon through inaccuracy in translation.

For instance, when a preacher has prepared his sermon on

the " other tongues " of Acts ii. 4, with a view to showing the converting power of the sanctified tongue, and finds on standing before his people that his pulpit version for " other tongues " reads, " the speech of other nations," his sermon loses its point at once. Or, when he has made ready to speak on the text, " Abstain from all appearance of evil," with special reference to the word "appearance," and finds instead, " Every kind of evil thing ought to be forbidden and not committed," he stands aghast, and has either to preach his sermon without his text, or fit a fresh sermon to it.

In consequence of this lack of literal accuracy in the existing versions, and taking into consideration that the Church had grown to important proportions, it was resolved at the great Missionary Conference of 1890, that they should be revised. For the last fifteen years past three bodies of revisers have been at work. One committee is — that for the High Wen-li version, whose style the profoundest scholar may not despise. A second committee is at work on a rendering in easy Wen-li, for men of secondary educational advantages, to whom the terseness of phraseology, and rareness of the characters used in the Higher version, would be difficult of apprehension. The third committee is revising the mandarin colloquial. Their labours are now approaching completion, and it is expected that at the coming Centenary Conference in 1907, which celebrates the arrival of Dr Morrison, the great Pioneer Translator, in this country, the three versions will be submitted and adopted.

There are, however, great masses of people in the South-eastern Provinces to whom mandarin is almost as much a sealed book as the Classical. Such are the populations of Shanghai, Ningpo, Wenchow, Fukien, and Kuangtung. Moreover, the two thousand characters in the New Testament are by no means easy to learn, whereas it is possible to write intelligibly all these vernaculars, as also the mandarin itself, in romanised letters. It is also far easier to teach a native, especially a native child, the romanised system of reading and writing than to teach him the more cumbrous characters. Hence, many years ago romanised versions were published in Ningpo, Amoy, Swatow, Taichow and other places along the coast. Recently Shanghai has followed suit, and at

last, the mandarin-speaking missionaries have adopted a uniform method of romanising, and are now publishing the New Testament in this simpler phonetic form.

The simplicity of the system is manifest from the fact, that a boy or girl can learn to read and write in as many months as it would take years to learn to read and write the native character. Some young men learn to read in a dozen lessons, and one youth, who took a lesson in the primer on a certain Sunday, came back to his pastor the week after, able to plod through his New Testament.

It is nearly twenty years since I was impelled to attempt to do for our two million Wenchow people, what Wycliff and Tyndall did for their four million Englishmen. The mandarin was then the only version within our people's reach. When read from the pulpit, none but those who had books could in any way follow, and to the majority even of these the reading was as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, for they failed to gather its meaning. Take for instance, some of the most constant expressions. The mandarin for "they" is *ta-mang*, whereas the colloquial is *gi-da-ko*; the characters for "there" are *na-li*, the colloquial *boa-ta*, or *nya-uh-doa*; the characters for "what" are *zang-mo*, the colloquial *ga-nyie*; the characters for "why" are *tsang-mo*, the colloquial *tsz-na*; the character for "not" is *pai*, the colloquial *fu*; for "have not" the book reads *mo-yao*, the native says *n-nao*. Hence for the sentence "Bring that thing here," the book reads, Na-ko tung-si na-lai, literally, "That-piece east-west seize-come"; the Wenchow man says, He-kai mu-z tso-li,—a very different phrase.

The mandarin is the simplest character version we possess, yet it is almost as far removed from the understanding of our people, as the Latin version is from the comprehension of a congregation of French peasants. Moreover, the mandarin version is despised by scholars as "neither three nor four," neither one thing nor another; indeed, southern scholars, on first reading it, find it as difficult and ungraceful as a southern Englishman finds a first reading of, say, Tennyson's "Northern Farmer."

Preferring to utilise native material rather than introduce the romanised system, which is distinctively foreign, I made

an early attempt to translate the Gospels into colloquial character. More than one failure soon convinced me of the futility of any such endeavour. For very many colloquial words there were no characters, so that nearly a quarter of each page would have consisted of new characters made up for our purpose, or of others diverted from their proper sound or meaning. Inn konsekwense the book wood hav red as hear I right,—verily " neither three nor four ! "

Nothing remained therefore but romanisation. After first compiling a system of spelling, and publishing a primer and a hymn-book, the next step was Bible translation. It would have saved much time to have taken the mandarin version, and translated it word for word into the local speech, but there was already sufficient evidence that that version would speedily require emendation. Indeed, Dr Griffith John was then already bringing out an independent revision, which was not without influence in inducing the Conference of 1890 to appoint its own Committee of Revisers. Independence being in the air I followed the fashion, and made a more or less independent translation of the four Gospels and the Acts, which the British and Foreign Bible Society accepted and printed during my furlough in 1893.

The way of translators is hard, but from the way of the modern translator, while it is still sufficiently rough and thorny, the more forbidding obstacles have been removed. The herculean labours of his predecessors and their enlightening, not to say fervid, discussions have formed his track, and what is left him to do is but to smoothe it by removing the briars and making the rough places plain.

Think for a moment of the difficulties of our pioneer translator. At the very outset, what word shall he use for God ? The Romanists introduced the term *T'ien Chu*, or, Lord of Heaven ; but that is a very evident foreign importation, and not well suited to the translator's use. Moreover, the Chinese are not without suitable terms of their own. There are two in common use, either of which is worthy of adoption. One is the classic name *Shang Ti*, Over King, or Supreme Ruler. The other is the every day term for their gods, *Shen*, god or spirit. Which of these terms shall the translator employ ?

Controversy on this subject lasted long, and even yet is not finally at rest. Both terms have been kept in use, and, when a reprint of the Scriptures is demanded, a portion thereof is printed with the term Shang Ti, and another portion with the term Shen. Recent inquiry has shown that a large majority of missionaries are in favour of Shang Ti, and it is possible that at the 1907 Conference this term will be adopted. It has the advantage of giving the clearer monotheistic idea of the two, and its use, from time immemorial, for the Highest Being known to the Chinese, gives it an eminent, if not pre-eminent claim.

The Rev. Dr Mateer has lately published a very admirable and exhaustive series of quotations from Chinese authors, with the view of upholding the claim of the term Shen, and he has advanced much of value in its support. It must be borne in mind that every Chinese word, unlike our Western words, is *per se* neither singular nor plural; it may be either; though just as the nouns sheep, deer, grouse, in English, are generally understood in the plural, unless preceded by an article or numerative, so, in Chinese, nouns are generally plural unless qualified by another word. In English we can say in one word, god or gods, in Greek, theos or theoi, but in Chinese, where there is no declension, the word Shen conveys the meaning of "gods" other than God. Consequently a word like Shang Ti, though not in itself singular, and even applied with qualifying additions to a few other gods, yet by classical usage carries with it when unqualified the singular meaning, and therefore claims more general acceptance for purposes of translation.

Again, what word shall our translator use for Spirit? *Shen* in ancient times covered this meaning, for it is used in the classics for the spirits of the departed, and for the human soul, as well as for local deities. But there is another word, *Ling*, which means spirit or intelligence, and which has come into general use amongst the Christians for spirit. Despite a persistent attempt to introduce *Shen*, and *Sheng Shen* for spirit and Holy Spirit, *Ling* and *Sheng Ling* have held their own, and it is possible they may receive adoption, for Shen implies the gods, and Sheng Shen the holy gods,

whereas Sheng Ling is a term comparatively free from idolatrous associations.

Another term which has caused the printing of separate editions for the American Baptists, is the word for baptism. Adopting the term introduced by the Roman branch of the church, Dr Morrison employed the word *Si*, to wash, or lave. Dr Marshman in his version introduced the term *Chan*, to dip, steep, soak. To this day the American Baptists employ this term, and have their separate " chan " version. Happily in Wenchow we have had no such difficulty to face, for our colleagues of the China Inland Mission, though Baptists, themselves use the term Si.

Some of the difficulties of the translator may be seen by a glance at the first chapter of St John's Gospel. Take the opening phrase, " In the beginning," and note how much depends upon the article. But there is no article in Chinese, so how is it to be expressed ? The word " in " also materially affects the meaning, but it cannot be satisfactorily translated into the language. *Ch'i-ts'u*, " rise-first," has been used by some, as it means " first, at first, outset." *T'a-ts'u* has been used by others, and means " very first," but conveys the idea of " at the very beginning " ; hence this has received general adoption.

" Was the Word." *Yu* does fairly well for " was," though its strict meaning is " have." " The Word." What *are* we to do without the article ! Simply " Word," leaves a large measure of uncertainty as to whether the whole or only a part is meant, and might be read, " At the very outset there was speech." Indeed we cannot employ the term " Word " at all, as it would convey no idea of the meaning it conveyed to the early Christians. With them Logos, the Word, had already a philosophic value, which by no means attaches to the Chinese terms 言 (sounds 亖 issuing from mouth 口), or 話 (words 言 and tongue 舌). This has necessitated the search for a character conveying an approximate meaning, and such a one has been found in the character 道 Tao, composed of 首, head, and 辶, to go, and meaning the right path, the way, the doctrine. Thus,

then, the nearest we can approach to our original text is, T'a ts'u yu Tao, literally, " Very beginning was Way " or, " At the very first was the doctrine."

In a land, where tens of thousands of men make a living by prognostication and divination, it is strange that there is not a word, or reasonable combination of words, to represent the name " Prophet." *Sien-chi* is the term invented by translators, but it means nothing more than fore-know. The glorious idea, contained in the Old and New Testament word, of forth-telling, or *foretelling*, is absent from the term translators have felt driven to adopt.

As to the word " priest," no one in his senses would ever dream that, in a country swarming with Buddhist and Taoist " priests," there would be any difficulty in finding a suitable term. Yet on examination we find that these men are not priests but monks, and the translator has to coin a name, unsatisfactory of course, but as near as the idea can be approached. *Chi-sz* is the word employed, and its meaning is simply " controller of the sacrifices," or a man who is appointed to offer sacrifice.

Again, in a land which lives so much from hand to mouth, and is always like Mr Micawber looking for something to turn up, the word " hope " should surely be in daily, nay hourly use. Alas! the very indifferent word "*wang*," observe, expect, has to reveal what it can of the Apostle's meaning, and often one is inclined to think that the Chinese are to the very letter without " God " and without " hope " in the world.

The words " heir " and " inheritance " ought to be quite easy of translation in a land where the number of lawsuits and quarrels over the property of childless relatives is legion. But here again one is doomed to disappointment. No man may will his property away in China as in England; his heirs are already fixed by the law of the land, and, though he have never a son of his own, his daughter cannot inherit. But the native term in use for " heir " is " sacrificial substitute," or some other word implying ancestral sacrifice, and how can such a term be used for " heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ " !

This country is one vast farm, and yet no suitable word

can be found for " first-fruits." There is no people on the face of the earth which carries such burdens on its shoulders, and yet we are unprovided with an appropriate rendering of " burdensome " and " burden," in the sense found in Corinthians. And though an unceasing torrent of cursing hourly floods the land, it is a puzzle to find a good colloquial translation of " accursed " in Galatians.

With what earnestness have we sought to express the abstract noun truth in one word, but "*chen*" is only an adjective, and cannot be used for truth, save with a noun. You may speak of a true word, a true God, a true way, but in this land of false words, false gods, and false ways, the qualifying word " true " has never had a chance to become the substantive " truth."

Even " death," which daily causes the wail to arise from myriads of breasts, does not exist, except in the form of dying or die. And as to " life," we cannot use "*huo*" alone, for it is a verb or adjective, and so we fall back necessarily on "*sheng*," which has become deflected from its original meaning " produce," or " beget," to mean the born, the living ; or we adopt "*sheng-ming*," ming meaning life in the sense of fate or decree. Consequently, in this land which has the greatest birth and death record on the face of the earth, we find it colloquially far from easy to express the nouns life and death.

If these simpler cases present such a formidable front, what is to be done with the deeper things of Scripture ! What are we to do with such unknown ideas as holiness, communion, godhead, fellowship, revelation, propitiation, resurrection, and a host of others ! Suffice it, that into words but feebly indicative of noble sentiments, nobility is being imparted, and just as, for instance, the Greek word for " love " acquired, under the " fulfilling " power of Christian influence, a richer and deeper meaning, so, amongst other words "*ai*," love, which in China contains neither warmth nor life, is being invested with that power which everywhere makes love to be " the greatest thing in the world."

Another difficulty that, at the outset, faces the translator into a vernacular is, what kind of vernacular he shall

use. Is it to be "coolie Chinese," or the speech of the educated. In the former, for instance, the word for "father" here is *ah-pa*, which someone has said is like our English "dad" or "daddy"; and the word for mother is *n-na*, the one who gives milk; whereas all classes understand, and occasionally use, the proper words *vu* and *mu*. In all cases like this, decision is easy, and "vu" and "mu" are adopted.

The word for "blind" is not so simple. The proper term is *hah-nga*, blind-eyed, but the people usually speak of the *moh-doa-ge*, or "place-feeler." Husband and wife, "*fu*" and "*ts'i*," should be well-known, but husband in colloquial is always *nö-tsz*, male, man, or *nö-tsz-k'ah*, man guest. Wife is *löe-üe-nyang*, "old comforter," or "*löe üe-nyang-k'ah*," literally, old peace man guest. Sun and moon should be *zaih* and *nyüeh*, but sun has been turned into *nyieh-diu vaih*, the sun (or heat) Buddha, and *t'a-yie vaih*, the great male (or positive-principle Buddha); while moon has been turned into *nyüeh-koa vaih*, the moon-light Buddha, or *t'a iang*, the great female (or negative) principle.

Such are a few samples of the many difficulties which keep the translator's brain active,—or turn it. Let it not, however, be thought that he is content to give an emasculated or inferior version of the Word of God to his people. He neither is, nor can be content, till he has provided the reader with a translation as accurate and chaste as in him lies, and as the language in its present condition permits. Faulty his translation must always be; all early efforts are. Who would care to read Wycliff's or Tyndall's versions now? Yet in their day they were read as never books had been read in England.

To sum up then, in China we have a classical version of the Scriptures, that in elegance takes rank with the best literature of the country. We have an easy Wen-li, which is both graceful and readily understood by men of fair education. We have also the mandarin, which makes up for occasional lapses in accuracy by excellence of style, and which, moreover, has already commenced to do what the English Bible did for England, in pioneering the way for a great literature in the mandarin language. This language,

through the advent of the railway and other improved means of communication, promises to become what English is throughout the British Isles, the *lingua franca* of the whole Empire.

As has already been shown, these three versions are undergoing revision, not because of lack of elegance, but because of the demand for accuracy. When the classical version was last revised in 1850, there were only three hundred baptised converts in China. When the mandarin version was first published in 1872, there were only ten thousand. To-day there is a great and increasing body of readers, and the Bible Societies now annually distribute two million copies of the Scriptures, whole or in part.

The romanised versions have had considerable success, especially in Ningpo, Amoy and Swatow. The latest complete version of the New Testament that has appeared is our Wenchow version, the translation of which I had the privilege of completing in 1903. The Rev. E. and Mrs Hunt, of the China Inland Mission, rendered valued aid by their notes and suggestions, and the version was accepted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, at whose expense it was printed here in Wenchow, under the supervision of the Rev. B. W. Upward, a mission press having been established specially for this purpose.

No period of my life has been so full of enlightenment, of enrichment, or of inspiration, as the laborious years spent in translating the Word of God into this language, and of one thing I am convinced, that whatever benefit others may receive, the translator is himself the chief individual gainer.

Our Christians treasure their Bibles, and it is a joy to see their well-thumbed copies. Last night as I took service in a Chinese house with a congregation of seventy or eighty around me, there was Ah Loa pah with his big print Bible, his daily companion; there were two biblewomen devoutly following as I read the lesson; there were half a dozen schoolgirls all with their copies; many of the men spelt their way as I slowly read the message, and even some of the women stumbled down the page after us. They carefully wrap their copies in handkerchiefs ere departing, so that the leaves or cover may not be torn, but it does not follow that they

keep them wrapped up till next service, for the daily reading is the daily pleasure of many who, a few years ago, bent the knee and put the forehead in the dust before an idol made of clay. Now with the Psalmist they joyfully cry, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

XIV

TYPICAL TEMPLES

"It is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols."

THINKING that an account of the religions we come "not to destroy but to fulfil" might be interesting to the reader, and desiring to discriminate as clearly as possible between the three religions, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddism, which though theoretically antagonistic are on terms sufficiently intimate to borrow each others garments without asking, I had a list made of the principal temples in the Wenchow city. There were forty-four of them. So far all was easy. The next thing was to classify them, and here my assistant and myself were soon stuck like a Chinese cart in the northern mud.

We had no difficulty in putting thirteen under the head of Buddhism, six in the Taoist list, and four under the title of Confucianist, but what of the remaining score? Were they indeed Confucian, and was that cult really as idolatrous as this list implied? Did it actually own over twenty important temples in this city, dedicated to all sorts and conditions of deities? Here were temples to the king of the Eastern Peak, to the king of the Peaceful Waters, to the king of Medicine, to the god of Fire, the North Star, the White Horse, the god of the Sea, the Queen Consort of Heaven, and many others. The Buddhist monk definitely disclaimed them; the Taoist monk hesitated to claim them. To whom then could they belong?

We put them all under the heading of Confucianism, and sent the list as now arranged, to an eminent native scholar, with a request that he would put us right if we were wrong in our classification. He immediately accepted our category

of Buddhist and Taoist temples, but on reaching those debited to his own Church of the Learned, hesitation got hold upon him. Finally he marked off five from the number, two to Confucius, two to the god of Literature, who dwells in the northern constellation, and one to Kwan-ti, an ancient hero, now the god of War. As to the rest he said that strictly speaking they did not belong to the Ju Chiao—literally, the Doctrine of the Learned, commonly known amongst foreigners as Confucianism—but seeing the gods were all deified Chinese, who mostly had been members of the Ju Chiao, the temples no doubt were, in a sense, Confucian.

Let us set out then to the first on the list. It is dedicated to the guardian deity of the county. Ten minutes' walk away is another to the guardian deity of the city, but as they resemble each other we will confine our visit to this one. Here at the entrance all doubt as to classification disappears at once, for we behold two proclamations, engraved in stone, and erected by the two superintendents of the Ju Chiao, one of whom resides in the county temple dedicated to the sage, the other in his city temple. These notifications indicate the price to be paid for flesh for the half-yearly sacrifices, and threaten condign punishment to extortioners, a punishment never administered, though not from any lack of the necessary material. Thus we are able to assure ourselves that this is without doubt a temple belonging to the philosophy of " the Learned."

As we enter we notice on our right a great white horse, the Chui Fung, or Fleet as the Wind, who at the behest of his master is swift as a cyclone in pursuit of the evil-doer, whether he be in the flesh or out of the flesh. On our left is a dark horse, the Che Dien, or Lightning Seizer, whose aim is relentless as the lightning's fiery dart. Others say that they are the two swift post-horses of the god within, for bearing his despatches with speed.

The main entrance, or " Ceremonial Gate," now faces us. We are charmed to be told that this is the Gate of Ceremony. By our own unaided wisdom we should never have guessed it; for here is a shoemaker unceremoniously cobbling a pair of very old shoes; there is an itinerant barber unceremoniously shaving a man's pate; close by—too close for

our comfort—is a representative of the great unsoaped, very unceremoniously engaged in entomological pursuits upon his ragged shirt. We are pleased indeed to read that this is the Gate of Ceremony! Twice a month, we are told, all this is swept aside, or rather a roadway is brushed through it for an hour, while the county prefect comes to worship his colleague the county god.

Passing through this gate we enter a quadrangle. In it four ragged trees are planted, one at each corner; close by us is the god's great theatrical stage, from which he is entertained with plays several times a year, and a stone path runs straight up from it to the main hall of the temple. There His Spirit Excellency takes his seat whenever his huge drum is beaten, and there the visible part of him may always be seen, made of painted clay. Two long side buildings, like cloisters, join the main building to the portico under which we stand. Shall we go straight up the centre walk to the throne of His Excellency, or up one side, then through the main building and down the other side? Let us go up the right side first.

Here, then, to begin with is a shrine to the Five Epidemic gods with their thirty-six pixies. These five gods are also called the Five Crowned Heads, a term also applied to Typhoid Fever, over which they have special power. Near the Fever gods, and not inappropriately, comes the Fire Engine. The Fire Brigades of China do good service during the outbreak of the frequent fires which play such havoc with her wooden cities. Their instruments are very primitive, but as the helmeted men rush along in the dark of the night with their buckets and their little pump, with torches blazing, lit flags flying, and gongs braying, they are quite impressive; and certainly, if noise could do it, they would awaken even the god of Fire from his slumbers, and induce him to exert his authority. The brigades are always connected with temples, and as the Chinaman has a god for everything, so has he a god for his fire engine.

Next come three of the Six Bureaux, which are found here as in every important yamen, for this temple is arranged as a Spirit Yamen. It must be borne in mind that just as the Chinese had discovered gunpowder, the mariner's compass,

printing from blocks, porcelain, the loose-tongued organ reed, and almost every other thing worth knowing, almost before anybody else was born, so also had they discovered "the natural law in the spiritual world" ages before Drummond appeared on the occidental stage. Even Drummond apparently could only conceive a principle, and was unable to follow it into its logical ramifications. But what could be expected of a poor barbarian! It required a Chinaman to thoroughly apprehend this law, which after all is simple enough "even for a woman to understand." It can be expressed in a sentence, thus: As is the terrestrial (*i.e.* China) so is the celestial. Ergo, as there is a county prefect in the visible, so must there be one in the invisible world. And as each county prefect has six boards, or offices in his yamen, so must there be six spirit bureaux in the spirit world, each presided over by a deceased Chinaman, who, in consequence of faithfulness during his life-time, has been imperially canonised and sent to be spirit secretary to the ruler of the spirit world in the county to which he is appointed.

Here then are six shrines, three this side, three the other. The first we come to is that of the Board of Rites. Within it sits, larger than life size, a bearded image of a benevolent old man, by whose side are two full-sized figures of his secretaries, one smiling and benignant, the other black-visaged and frowning; the one holding the book of rewards, the other that of punishments. In front is a censer and candlesticks. Over the shrine his various offices are inscribed. He has charge, we note, of all matters relating to rank and degrees, which have their root in a former existence; he also holds the book of life and death, that is, heaven or hell; he keeps account of the merit laid up by fasting, and by the intoning of sacred books.

Next comes the Domestic Board, or Treasury. Fronting us is another large image of a bearded man of middle age, also with his two secretaries, similar to the first. On the tablet above we read that his duties, like all the other five, are comprised under four heads. His relate to the family, namely, to see that good parents obtain sons and grandsons, and wicked parents be deprived of them; he has charge also of the harvest; of wealth, its use and abuse; and of the

distribution of the good at rebirth in wealthy families, and the bad in poor families!

Following this shrine is another styled the Board of Appointments. Herein another middle-aged bearded man faces us, whose duties consist in noting down the conduct of the local mandarins, and registering all their bribes and squeezes; in entering up all families with virtuous offspring, with a view to granting them happiness and long life; in observing what sons are filial and reverent to their parents, fraternal to their elder brothers, and well-disposed to their friends; and finally in reporting the virtue that arises from releasing living creatures from death — chiefly consisting of snakes caught for that purpose.

What is this handsome tablet recently hung up here, glorious in lacquer and gilt? "He has protected our five parishes." It is presented by a magistrate who has just left us, an avowed Confucianist. Evidently then this is a Confucian temple, though not a temple to Confucius. We pass beneath the tablet and enter the main hall. On our right is a long table, behind which sits a cadaverous opium-smoker. He is a fortune-teller, and is prepared to choose a lucky day for your son's wedding, or tell you whether the dose of medicine you propose to take will suit your case, or—any mortal thing you like. Indeed he is quite willing to go beyond the range of the mortal if you wish it.

Behind him, guarded by a palisade, are three huge standing figures, and on the opposite side of the hall are three more. These are the six clerks of the spirit prefect, corresponding to the six clerks who stand in line on both sides of the living prefect when he ascends his daïs. Over each of these clay clerks is a list giving the name of the living holder of the corresponding office in the prefect's yamen, and those of his staff. These lists announce the dates appointed to each for offering incense at the shrine of his patron in the invisible world.

With such an array of evidence before him who will accuse the Chinese of lack of logic? If the natural law in truth rules in the spiritual world, then the Government of Heaven is naturally on the model of the Chinese Empire, and Shang Ti (God) must have his officers, just as Hwang Ti (the king)

has his. Without such officers how could he get through his work!

At last we stand before the great shrine of His Excellency, the Spirit Ruler over our two millions of Wenchow people, and the many tens of millions of Wenchow ghosts and devils the number of which it is beyond human skill to affirm. The shrine is as imposing as it is untidy. Within it, whenever a petitioner beats the drum, must His Excellency sit sweltering behind those dirty curtains, and longing in vain for some one to come and let in the breeze, or fan him this hot day. You cannot see him, except by going up close to the shrine and putting back the curtains. Then you find to your surprise that he is less in size than his underlings. Why this strange anomaly? Well, if you must be inquisitive, the real reason is that the secretaries never go out, while His Excellency is sometimes required to go in procession through the city. The Chinese are a canny race; clay is heavy, therefore a small image is easier to carry, also a large one if joggled too hard might shed an arm, or even a head on the way; that is why His Excellency is made small and portable.

There he sits eight or ten feet above the ground. In front of him stretches the great altar, standing six feet high; below it is the smaller altar, and lower still another square altar on which offerings are placed. Candles and incense are burning, and a lamp hangs in front, exhaling lamp-black day and night.

What are these numerous forms prostrate before this powerful deity? Are they the reverent outlines of many worshippers, who offer their most humble homage and beseech his powerful aid? Are they thus bowed in fervent adoration, or seeking the pardon of their sins and help to live a righteous life? Far from it. Let no such Western notions colour the glorious Orient, for, where God is not worshipped, such experiences do not tinge the national life. Adoration is unknown in the Far East. As a matter of fact, the month is July, the hour is noon, and the heat outside is intolerable, even with sun-hat and umbrella. His Excellency's temple is cool and shady, and the concrete floor by no means too hard for a tired man, nor the straw kneeling mats too dirty for his head. These prostrate forms are coolies, who have

turned in from the scorching streets for their siesta, and some of them are audibly enjoying it.

What are all those red labels, which look like Chinese visiting-cards, pasted along the front of His Excellency's shrine, beneath his footstool ? Though left by callers they are not ordinary visiting-cards. Here is one beseeching the influence of His Excellency to restore him to health, and promising that on his recovery he will come with offerings of a pig's head, a goose, and a fowl. The next card, also asking for recovery from sickness, promises that the petitioner will walk in chains as a criminal in His Excellency's next procession. Here is a long petition complaining that the petitioner has wrongly been accused of gambling, and that the accusers are endeavouring to squeeze large sums out of him, that the judge has called up the case for trial, but the accusers delay to appear, that his trade is being ruined and his life made intolerable by this charge lying over him, and he beseeches His Excellency to avenge him of his adversaries, and clear his tarnished name.

These prayers and appeals have all been written in duplicate. One copy has been burnt before His Excellency's shrine, to make sure that it reached the ethereal regions, the petitioner also offering incense and prostrating himself to the ground, touching or nearly touching it nine times with his forehead, which obeisance is commonly known as a kotow. Having performed his worship he affixes the duplicate appeal to the foot of His Excellency's shrine, and departs in peace. Should he not speedily recover, away he or his proxy goes to some other god with a similar petition, and to several others afterwards if necessary, reminding one of the lady who never had a place for anything, and who took comfort therefrom that she had all the more places in which to search !

His Excellency is not a permanent resident ; for, just as the prefect in the flesh has a nominal six years' tenure of his post, so the spirit prefect is also subject to transfer. The present tenant of the office bears the surname of Ling, or Grove, and his personal name is Tsai Shang, or Bearer of Felicity. During his earthly life-time he was a native of Canton, and has now held office here ten years. When a change is desirable a present of ten dollars or so to the Taoist

Pope is said to be sufficient to bring about the desired result, with an imperial rescript to make it effectual. Let us ask this fortune-teller whether His Excellency will take away his body when he is next transferred.

"Honoured Rider-in-a-carriage"—a thing he has never seen, but we may as well be polite—"when His Excellency is transferred from Wenchow will he take his body—does the image accompany him?"

"Oh! no indeed: the image remains for the new arrival," he answers with a grin, for the Chinese are generally ashamed of their idolatry in the presence of a foreigner. So the new deity takes up his abode in the cast-off clay! Convenient, no doubt, but how fortunate that exchanging bodies is not a human accomplishment!

On His Excellency's right is a large shrine to the Chinese Esculapius—evidently even a god is none the worse for having a doctor at hand. Next is another shrine to the five spirit gods of the five divisions which are under His Excellency's control. On his left is a large shrine to the five gods of the five blessings: happiness, government-pay, long life, pleasure, and sons; further on is another to some other god; in the adjoining building are the sixty gods of the Chinese cycle, one for each year, and a host of others, really too many for one day's inquiry.

What is this building behind? "Are there more idols in there?" we ask our friend the astrologer. "No, this building contains the private apartments of His Excellency and his family. It is at present being used as an assembly hall by the newly-constituted Chamber of Commerce." You notice that female angels or deities are painted on the gates, indicating that within are the women's quarters. Who ever heard of a prefect, or any other prominent mandarin, taking up an appointment without carrying his wives and families with him! And if marriage is divine shall the gods be less divine than men! Moreover, how would it be possible for any god to stay mewed up in his shrine day and night behind those stuffy curtains! No, he too must have his bed-room, his dining-room, his library, his harem, his theatre.

But we must leave. Let us go down the opposite side to that we have described. Here are shrines to the Heads of

the three other Boards. First, the War Office, represented by an elderly man and his two secretaries, whose duties cover affairs relating to wandering demons, fires, the soldiers and police of the nether world, and the sin accumulated by the slaughter of animals. Next comes the Head of the Board of Punishments, or Ministry of Crimes, whose stern face and eyes protruding in vengeful glare are enough to make even the innocent feel guilty.

The Board of Punishments has charge of affairs relating to the punishment of evil-doers, to epidemics, to malicious speech, and to the discrimination and reward of good and evil. Finally we reach the Board of Works, represented by a calm-faced individual, with his two secretaries. He records the merit arising from the voluntary mending of roads and bridges, the providing of ferry boats and public lamps, the upkeep of temples, and he also records all robberies and burglaries.

Following him comes the "local god," who in the spirit world is what his counter-part, the tipac, or beadle, is in the natural world. And last of all we face the god of Dreams, whose duty it is to bear dreams at the command of His Excellency to those who pray for them. Through a dream a man, even the learned Confucianist, may be led to decision in doubtful cases; and if the dream be not apparent to the intelligence of the dreamer, why, here is another fortune-teller, with his table and little rolls, who will no doubt be willing to interpret it for a mere trifle; for idolatry of the ordinary description is cheap, cheap as sawdust, and, as spiritual pabulum, about equally healthy. The idolater's candles are cheap; his mock silver ingots and dollars are cheap; his magnificent set of furniture and boxes of clothing, all burnt and sent in smoke to the spirit world for the comfort of his deceased relatives, being also of paper, are also cheap, and of course paper turns into the real article in the other world, a transmutation, not of metals but of paper, that would be very useful for this world if the gods would only lend us the touchstone for a day or two.

This prefectural temple, then, gives a fair idea of the faith and practice of the Established Church of China in its popular form, common from prefect to beggar. Now let us, by a visit

to the temple of the great sage Confucius, see it in a higher form, at least in one of its more select forms; for only the scholar is here entitled to worship the Scholar's Patron Saint. To see the Chinese religion in its very highest form it is necessary to go to Peking, and there appreciate the meaning of the T'ien dan, or Temple of Heaven, where the emperor sacrifices to the Majesty on High.

Here we are at last, at the great County Temple to Confucius. There is another almost as large five minutes' walk away, belonging to the city, or rather parish, for each of the six divisions or parishes of the Wenchow county has a temple to the sage. Moreover just as each parish and county has its own, so is it with each province, and there is in Peking an imperial one of still more majestic character, with plenitude of marble steps, marble balustrades, and marble monuments. In form, however, they are all replicas of each other. The great boundary wall is always coloured vermilion, and the roof, as in the case of all temple roofs, is liberally decorated with fantastic figures, useful for warding off evil spirits, and resembling the gargoyles on old English churches; only there are more of them, and they are more awe-inspiring.

Entering the pavilion gateway we find ourselves in a large courtyard. What are these on the left? We had been given to understand that the sect of the Learned had no idols within the precincts of the temple to the great sage, yet here at the very entrance is an idol representing the ubiquitous local guardian, or parish beadle, who holds the smaller powers of the air in control; there are also other minor deities visible, but let us pass on and through the next gateway.

Behold! another large area, with corridors down each side, and a broad pathway up the middle leading to a lofty hall. We follow the path, which speedily crosses a stone bridge thrown over a lakelet, emblematic of the student's passage from ignorance to wisdom, a sort of Confucian baptism, only they avoid the water by passing over it. Ascending the stone steps at the end of the path we stand in the broad and lofty hall, where the Literary Chancellor, on his visit from the provincial capital to examine candidates for the first degree, addresses the assembled befrocked and becrowned literati. Behind the hall is the abode of the Dean

of the county ; hence this may be considered as the Wenchow University hall.

To our right are some steps. Ascending them we find a number of small shrines. Here, however, are no idols, nothing but tablets as in an ancestral temple ; one to the great Commentator Chufutsz, the others to certain departed Deans of the University.

Now we retrace our footsteps, and meeting a respectable-looking man who has charge of the premises, we ask permission to visit the University chapel. He leads us into another courtyard with corridors on either side, and again a lofty hall faces us at the end. Our guide tells us that the tablets in the shrines along the corridors are to the seventy-two disciples of Confucius. We reach the main building by a number of steps, and stand within a lofty, handsomely decorated hall. It is just past noonday, and our entry disturbs the quiet of the spot. It also disturbs the slumbers of a score of huge bats, which flit about in much discomfort—theirs and ours—and which with their mates have covered the floor, the altar, the everything with a rich guano. Now they fly from our presence, squeaking aloud that Confucius is already given over " to the bats," and we are inclined to think " to the moles " as well.

There, in that great central shrine, stands an upright piece of carved wood, on which are carved the words : The Spirit Throne of the Most Sacred Philosopher and Primus Magister K'ung. In front are three large trestles, stained with the coagulated gore of the ox, the goat and the pig which are offered each spring and autumn, and over there are the altars whereon other offerings are made. In this great hall the mandarins and many of the literati, clad in their handsome silk robes, twice a year prostrate themselves before the " Spirit Throne," in homage to the soul of their great master.

To the right is a shrine containing tablets to his favourite disciples ! To our left is another building containing tablets to Mencius—the Paul of Confucianism—and to others. Behind is still another temple containing tablets to the ancestors of the sage, to whom sacrifices are also offered at the same time as to himself.

No image of Confucius is worshipped in the Confucian

temples. An attempt made ages ago to introduce such an image in addition to the spirit throne was energetically resisted —some say because he was such a very ugly man. The nearest approach now to such in some temples is a stone tablet engraved with a relief of the sage, but it is not placed there for worship.

Notice in the courtyard here, amongst the uncut straggling grass, four mounds each meant to contain a tree. Like the generality of Confucian temples this court wears a distinctly uncombed appearance. Let us ask how it is that instead of four trees there is only one — that scraggy specimen over there to the left. "Oh! the other three have decayed and not been replanted" is the reply. Fit emblem of the religion of the sage, three parts decayed, and in the vacant places flourish superstition, ignorance and degradation. Nowadays the would-be follower of Confucius trusts more for entry into the sacred fold of the Learned, to worship at the shrine of the Star of Literature than at that of the sage. That temple now treads on his very toes; its wall runs into his, and its popularity is much greater.

Only one more temple is necessary to a fair idea of the state religion, this so-called Confucianism, and a visit is hardly requisite. Nevertheless it represents the most powerful article of religion in the land. I mean the ancestral temple. There are many in the city, but they abound in much greater proportion in the rural districts, where every clan has its own. There is little to see: a large hall; a long table for the offerings; a wide shrine containing tablets of carved wood, each inscribed with half a score characters indicating that it is the spirit throne of the deceased progenitor; several bowls with burnt-out sticks of incense standing in front; sometimes a picture of the ancestral founder and his wife behind the shrine. That is all, but it represents our strongest opponent in China, and the Christian Church may yet find a right way of making a friend of it instead of a foe, for Christianity may fairly claim filial piety as "with us" and not 'against us."

Let us now proceed to a temple of the TAOIST RELIGION. It is in a secluded street, but on entering we discover a newness about the place that indicates prosperity. Everything

is clean and smart, the walls are newly white-washed, and the very gods, wonder of wonders, actually look tidy. I have never been in this temple before, indeed have never heard of it, and but for writing this chapter should still have remained ignorant of its existence. Nor, indeed, have I ever been in any of the other temples we are inspecting, for having visited elsewhere, and where I am not so well-known as in Wenchow, some of the finest temples in China, the local temples have had no great attraction. For who can thread the mazes of idolatry? And what need is there to be intimate with all the network of heathendom in order to show forth that Light of Life which will enable those enmeshed in superstition to escape from its coils? But let us see what this place has to reveal.

Taoism in its popular form maintains its existence by the credulity of the people. In this respect it differs widely from Confucianism pure and simple. The three religions indeed may be said to be mutually complementary, three segments of a circle, Confucius standing for this life, for justice, righteousness, and the state; Taoism for the supernatural, for research into the forces of nature, immortality, individualism; and Buddhism for compassion, meditation, indifference to this life and preparation for the life to come.

What then has Taoism to show us? The temple we are in follows the usual quadrangular form common to mansion, yamen, temple and palace throughout China, with a courtyard, or series of courtyards open to the sky. We are now entering the first courtyard. On our right is a shrine to the patron god of the bean-curd makers, and a side temple containing amongst many others the Sixty Cycle gods, the most curious of which is one exhibiting a long arm and hand protruding from each eye-socket, with an eyeball in each palm—useful for looking down one's back! On our left is another to the protector of life, whoever he may be.

Coming now to the front part of the main building we see facing us at the entrance a handsome shrine, in which stands a gilded figure of "the faithful King and Philosopher." He stands in full panoply of war, with drawn sword and martial mien, daring any evil to intrude within the precincts of the temple of "Seeing by Reason." On his left are two shrines.

One of these is to the god of Thunder, the Chinese Thor, a white-headed old man, with a spare eye standing on end in the middle of his forehead. Around him are clustered his four assistants: one his recorder; the next a figure with a long streak of lightning stretched around him; the third a lady with cymbals who makes the thunder roar; and the fourth, a malevolent-looking creature with a mouth like a hawk's bill, a hammer in one hand, and a spike in the other, for driving a fact home into the brain of an offender. Further on is a shrine to the god of Literature. On the right are two more shrines, one to a deified personage of secondary importance, yet known as the Supreme Ruler of the Azure Heavens, and the other to the god of War.

Passing through the inner door we face the main quadrangle and find four more shrines, two in the east corridor, and two in the west. One is to the Chinese Esculapius, the founder of the "science" of medicine, another is to one of the Immortals or Genii. A third is to the "originator of the bamboo tube," whatever may be meant by that, and the fourth is to "the dark ladies of the nine heavens."

Now we reach the great hall, with its shrine to the Three Pure Ones, a manifest imitation of the Buddhist trinity, just as that in its turn was copied from Brahminism. Indeed Taoism is greatly and unfortunately indebted to Buddhism for its present form. The Three Pure Ones are by some said to be Lao-tsz in three forms of manifestations; by others to be a fanciful trinity adopted from the Buddhists. Below them is a deified person known as the Pearly Emperor, a very popular object of worship. Below again are the Three Rulers, one ruling the upper regions whence he bestows blessings; the second ruling the middle or earth region, and forgiving sins; the third ruling the lower region, and saving from danger.

To our left is a large chapel, wherein dwells the "Holy Mother," who is worshipped for the gift of children. Near to her is another female deity, who protects in cases of small-pox, and further in is a big box-bed, before which a quaint old couple are stiffly seated, who guarantee sleep to a restless child. Many are the thank-offerings scattered about these shrines; paper boots, paper spectacles, paper clothes,

paper hats, paper playthings—all expressive of gratitude for petitions answered.

None of the shrines we have so far seen appears to claim much attention from the few worshippers present, who are evidently more interested in something going on beyond that little door to the east. Let us go inside and see. Here we find ourselves in a chapel dedicated to Lü T'ung Pin, whose name will be referred to in a later chapter. Suffice it now that he is a great saint of the Taoist cult, and much in vogue hereabouts for his advice, especially in cases of illness. You notice how crowded the chapel is with tablets and votive offerings, presented by those whose prayers have received satisfactory answers.

There sits a monk, the only one we have seen as yet in the temple. He is a fat, pleasant-looking fellow, and his face expresses more intelligence than would the combined faces of a dozen Buddhist monks, whose chief occupation is to look down their noses. Not that this man's occupation calls for much brain work, for as you see, it lies almost entirely in receiving the bamboo tallies brought by the worshippers, and in giving slips of paper, printed with the answer of the oracle, to the applicants, who pay their cash, take their papers, and depart.

See this young man ; he has just offered incense and candles, prostrated himself before the shrine, and slowly shaken out three bamboo tallies from the bamboo tube in which they stand. He worships again and shakes out three more sticks. The two sets of sticks, every one of which is numbered, he brings to our monk. The latter bends down behind his counter, and, with rapidity born of much practice, extracts from his drawer the slips which correspond to the numbers, and reads them to the worshipper. This youth, as it happens, has come to obtain a prescription each for two relatives. Though the prescriptions contain harmless ingredients the monk warns him not to mix the two cases, not to give John's medicine to Tom ! We have read that there are Chinese quack doctors in California making $5000 to $10,000 a year out of Americans. Why not import this quack method and save money ?

Another man approaches with his sticks. " What is it

you are inquiring about ?" asks the monk. "So-and-so," says the man. "You've shook tallies from the wrong tube then. Go and shake again." Two women are now telling the god in tones of whispered excitement that they have to leave their present abode, and they are anxious to learn if a certain date is a lucky one for removing. One of them says aloud to the other, "If we don't get a lucky answer we'll go and join the Roman Catholics, and then we can defy them," *i.e.* the people who are pressing them to remove. The tally is duly shaken out, and away they go to the monk for the fateful answer. We see and hear this and more as we sit here. There is evidence that our oracle is inquired of on many and varied counts, from doses of medicine downwards. Indeed "inquire within on everything" might well be the text over the door of the shrine, for the god is quite prepared to give some sort of answer, however Delphic in character.

Note that square wooden tray filled with fine smooth sand, over which is suspended a pen the like of which you have never seen before. That is the god's writing-table. Make your offering, ask the medium to lay hold of one handle of the pen, and take hold of the other yourself, and see what the god causes you to write. It may be quite illegible to you, but the medium will read it. Now why doubt ? Have faith, the faith defined by the little boy as "the belief in that which you know to be false," and then all will be simple enough, yourself into the bargain.

Let us end our morning's visitation by seeing what the BUDDHIST RELIGION has to show us. Remember we could take you to fifty more large temples within the radius of a mile, all varying materially from those already seen, for temples and idols abound everywhere; and, as already observed, there are probably as many idols as people in this land, where the inhabitants are, in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, "mad upon their idols."

We enter the first court. All is deserted and quiet. Before us stands the front building of the quadrangle, and in the entrance is a shrine. What a fat, jolly old god sits within the glass case, his face rippling and his sides shaking with laughter. Who is he ? Surely Buddhism has been maligned !

With such a god it must be a most joyous religion. Far, far from it. Originally it was the most pessimistic and hopeless religion the world has known, and even this fat old Buddha, rightly understood, is but an ever present witness of its pessimism. This is the Laughing Buddha, who sitting cross-legged, naked to the waist, looks out on the world and laughs and laughs and laughs day and night without ceasing —but it is a cynical laugh at the vanity of all things mundane, and the follies of mankind. What an empty world, he says, and what a crassly stupid people !

Back to back with him is the image of Wei-to (Veda), the protector of monasteries, who, armed to the teeth, defies all powers of evil. Ranged on either side are four gigantic figures, the dragon kings who guard the gate of the temple, just as they are said to face the four corners of the Universe at the foot of Mount Meru, situated in the midst of the earth, whose head is in heaven and whose feet are in hell.

Entering the main hall we find three huge gilded figures of Buddha, each sitting tailor-fashion on an enormous carved lotus. Here are two sleepy-looking old priests lazily enjoying their pleasant idleness. It is almost impossible to extract any reliable information out of priests, as they themselves are generally quite ignorant of the names of their objects of worship. Let us try these two sleek old men and see if they know what these figures represent. You may call them what you like, they reply ; you may call the middle one Shakyamuni, and the two end ones the two Buddhas prior to Buddha ; or you may call the end one Kwan-yin, the middle one Amitabha, and this one Maitreya ; or you may describe them by other names if you wish. In some places they are known, the middle one as Shakyamuni, and the end ones as Dharma the Law, and Samgha the Priesthood. Sometimes they are also spoken of as Buddha that was, Buddha that is, and Buddha that is to come. Below them is a female image, with many arms, nominally a thousand, she should also have a thousand eyes, but there is not sufficient room on her to bestow so large a number of hands and eyes. This is the famous goddess of mercy, mentioned above in masculine form as Kwan-yin, for Buddhist deities are by no means limited to any one form of incarnation.

What are those large copper-coloured figures ranged down either side of the hall? They are the images of the eighteen Lohans or Arhats, otherwise the first Buddhist apostles to China, who came to the borders of this land two centuries B.C. In some Buddhist centres there are large temples filled with avenues of five hundred huge representations of these and other Buddhist missionaries. Below our eighteen Lohans is a long line of images in Chinese dress. All the gilded idols have Hindoo faces, and as to dress it is chiefly noticeable by reason of its scantiness. But these figures are Chinese, and over their heads we read the office which each holds in the Buddhist pantheon. All have something to do in the nether world, as arbiters of "justice" to the departed Chinaman.

There is nothing more of interest here, but we have seen enough to prove that the would-be godless system of Buddhism is now bursting with man-made gods, that the contemplative life has become a prolonged snore, and that compassion for the suffering has ended in feeding sacred pigs and sacred fish, also in swarms of fleas and their cousins.

Let us now go and look at hell,

> "The seat of desolation, void of light,
> Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
> Casts pale and dreadful!"

It is much the worse for wear since I was last here, mute token that whatever may be the case with an immaterial hell, a material one is by no means endless. Here again is the usual courtyard with its two corridors and the great hall at the end. We will confine our attention to the corridors with their ten shrines, five on each side. This is the temple of the Ten Judges, before whom all men must go after death to receive according to that which they have done in the flesh.

Shrine the first shows the bridge over which the souls are being led to confront their first judge, and below are the tortures which it falls to his lot to administer. We cannot spare time for all the harrowing detail, either of this or the other shrines, nor would the sensitive reader sleep better for such detail—especially were his conscience troublesome.

Each shrine contains the huge image of a judge seated on high, with his host of diminutive assistants below carrying out the tortures to which he has doomed his victims.

See the poor naked victims being dragged out of the holes in the imitation rocks where they have been hiding! Ox-headed lictors drive them at the point of the sword, drag them by the hair of the head, beat them along with clubs. Here are more poor wretches with woe-begone faces, still clothed, but being violently stripped of their garments; there are others being boiled alive; over there still others being sawn asunder, ground to slime in mills, pounded to a jelly in mortars, thrown from high rocks on to the hill of spears, having their tongues torn out, being plunged into the lake of blood, made to swallow boiling liquids, tied to red-hot pillars—being disembowelled—all the horrors that the compassionate Buddhist mind can invent, and the modeller in clay can fashion. It is a veritable Chamber of Horrors, beside which the Inquisition was feeble. Let us quit this gruesome spot, with the comforting thought that the Chinese also leave open to these wretched souls a way of escape, even though it only be to return to the miseries of the world.

A visit to a large monastery is very interesting, provided the monks be civil as they usually are in the south. The boom, boom of the large bell, the drone, drone of the chants, the slow processions before the great shrine, the quiet repose, all have their attractions for the weary man. Given such a monastery amongst the glorious scenery of the mountains, and such superb weather as may at times be had here, repose stretches out seductive arms, and a man of troubles and sorrows may well be tempted to rest himself therein.

Fifteen years ago I had a very different experience. Under the kindly guidance of the Rev. Dr Lowry, I was visiting the great Lama Temple in Peking. Though invited by one of its monks, who had promised us a friendly reception and a view of the giant Buddha, our arrival was the signal for instant attack. We were set upon by a savage crowd of Lamas armed with huge Mongol horsewhips, which they played with resounding blows about our ankles. By a flank movement — indeed several of them—we succeeded in

reaching the inner door, and upon payment of dollars were allowed an entry. The premises were very fine, and desirous of photographing one of the central buildings I innocently set up my camera. At the moment all was perfectly quiet, with never a monk in sight, but—we only recovered my camera after a severe tussle with a ruffianly mob which instantly appeared, in the course of which our fingers were badly scratched and the camera damaged. Nor did we see the big Buddha after all, for on the monk who had invited us bringing the key to open the door of the shrine, it was immediately snatched from his hands. We decided that the outside of this temple was healthier than the inside, and were glad to escape, if not with a whole skin, at least with unbroken bones.

XV

THE NATIVE RELIGIONS: THEIR FOUNDERS

"Canst thou by searching find out God?"

HALF a millennium before Christ our world witnessed the glorious springtide of the human intellect. Then, in Eastern Europe, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Anaxagoras, Zeno, searching in the created for the Creator, brought forth the fruit of their virile minds, and pressed from that ripe vintage inspiration for the philosophy of all succeeding ages. Even before their day, in Western Asia, Isaiah in yet nobler strain had sung with no uncertain note of Him "that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in," and the heart of those who hearken to his music still throbs with his in joyous adoration.

Nor was the Far Orient left uninspired, for over its towering peaks three brilliant planets arose, heralding the advent of the dayspring from on high. Less luminous than the Greek philosopher, and pale as dim candles in the transcendent glow of the Hebrew prophet, these three great lights of Eastern Asia have, nevertheless, influenced a mass of human beings vastly outnumbering the peoples stirred by the Greek, inspired by the Hebrew, or as yet illumined even by the Son of Man Himself.

Buddha, Confucius, and Lao-tsz: a trinity of noble names! Buddha the Ascetic, Lao-tsz the Mystic, and Confucius the Moralist—three great luminaries that have shone upon this mighty race, through two thousand years of sunless history. From these has been derived almost the only radiance that,

for countless myriads of the Mongolian peoples, has lightened the rugged pathway of daily life, and the via dolorosa of approaching death; and the reflection thereof has even glimmered into the dank darkness of the dismal tomb, revealing beyond its dreariness the dim perspective of a something good and lasting, of hue far different from the pale cast of ghostly death.

Of the three schools founded by these worthies two only are Chinese, for Buddhism is no more indigenous to this land than is Christianity. It may be well therefore, before dealing with Buddhism and other imported religions, to first treat of the two cults which are native to the country. So great, however, has been the influence of foreign importations that, in order to learn what are the ideas of the Chinese themselves, we must go back to the sixth century before Christ.

Even then it is impossible to say that we find a purely native religion, for the Chinese, throughout their history, have always had a measure of communication with the outside world. Neither let it be thought that the two sages, Lao-tsz and Confucius, originated the cults known by their names. Confucius correctly describes himself as "a transmitter and not a creator, believing in and loving the ancients," and Lao-tsz was only one of many contemporary mystics and recluses. The Chinese religion already existed, had indeed existed from ages beyond the records of history. These two men took hold of it, Confucius by its right hand, and Lao-tsz by its left; the one according to his practical nature, by its work-a-day limb, the other by its less obtrusive fellow.

The ancient religion, so far as we have any record, seems to have consisted of the worship of a supreme being, of ancestors, and of the spirits presiding over the forces of nature. But when a people who have apprehended God, however dimly, add thereunto the worship of any other spirit or object, no limit can be set to its succeeding degradation, as the superstitions of the Hindus and Chinese, and even of Latin and Greek Christianity bear ample testimony. Hence, by the time Confucius was born, religion had already become grossly adulterated. Copious records, however, existed—historical, ceremonial, divinatory, poetic—and the

task this great reformer set for himself was to edit these records, and to restore the primitive religion.

He appears to have found in his day, as well as amongst the material at hand, an extravagant belief in the supernatural, in signs and wonders, in apparitions, in the calling down of spirits, in magical performances, and in a whole phantasmagoria of wild crudities. With a mind bent on the practical, these supernatural and spiritualistic elements had no attraction for him, and he made the objective of his writings and teachings the government of men by a law of righteousness and ceremonial, of which the ruler of the state was to be the chief concrete exponent.

The importance of worship, and of human responsibility to the powers above, he fully recognised; hence the gods to whom sacrifices should be offered, by prince and plebeian, were carefully defined, according to the ancient tenets. He never had the good fortune to meet a prince willing to put himself to the trouble of giving his theories a fair trial. Consequently, when advanced in years, and disappointed by neglect and apparent failure, he declared that, could his life have been prolonged, he would have applied himself wholly to the study of the philosophy of nature, as exhibited in " the Book of Changes." This book is the ancient and incomprehensible Chinese Principia of Natural Law, which has been used for three thousand years, for the most part as a book of divination. Dr Faber tells us that here the mind of Confucius comes into touch with that of Lao-tsz. This book may be their common bond, though the Tao teh ching shows little trace of its influence.

Lao, unlike Confucius, was a visionary, a mystic, a searcher. His desire was to know the Tao, or ultimate law that ran through all nature, controlling the world, seen and unseen. To this study he applied his life, but, again unlike Confucius, the only book he left to the world—a book written when over eighty years of age as he withdrew himself from the society of man—was a brief, unsatisfactory treatise on the greatness and mysteriousness of Tao, this inscrutable law, which, after a life-time of research, he had failed to apprehend. Better, however, to scale the mountain of truth, if only to be enveloped in its clouds, than for ever to cling to the dull,

prosaic plains beneath ; and, in the clouds, Lao more nearly touched the hem of the divine robe than ever did Confucius in the plains below.

In these two men, K'ung (Confucius) and Lao, we have, then, leaders of very different moulds ; the first, a moral and political philosopher, ceremonially and sincerely religious ; the other, a religious and natural philosopher, whose vision saw beyond ceremonies, and whose view of the hidden glory made his selfless moral teaching disesteem the vanity and egoism of mankind. The robe of Confucius, the seer of the tangible and matter-of-fact, has fallen on his disciples ; and the mantle of Lao, the philosopher of the unseen world, is being worn by his followers : but both are sadly soiled and woefully bedraggled.

These two cults owe much, though in different directions, to two men who followed. On the one hand, that of Confucius is greatly indebted to Mencius, who, upwards of a century after the " Master's " death, materially strengthened its position. His analects now form one of the " Four Books " of the Confucian canon. On the other hand the Laofucian, or Taoist cult, is to be condoled with on the advent, five centuries after the withdrawal of Lao-tsz from the world, of Chang Tao Ling. He introduced not into China, where the ideas already existed, but into the Taoist cult, a search after immortality amongst drugs and potions, the pursuit of a talisman for transmuting the baser metals, and a sword and charms for expelling evil spirits ; the sword and charms, we are told, on the authority of an emperor of the present dynasty, " remain in his (Chang's) family to this day." Moreover, whilst the head of the K'ung family is, by imperial appointment, a duke, remaining in perpetual charge of the Confucian mausoleum, with its appanage and privileges, the head of the Chang family is also by imperial appointment a pope of the Taoist order, and, as such, by far the more powerful of the two. He it is who to-day, with imperial assent, yet practically at his own will and pleasure, moves the state divinities about from pillar to post, including those of his rivals the Confucians !

Confucius and Lao were contemporaries, Lao being fifty years the senior. We have only a record of their meeting

once, on which occasion Lao-tsz, then over eighty years of age, took upon himself to administer a philosophic pill to his younger visitor. "Put away," he said, "your proud air and many desires, your insinuating habit and wild will. They are of no advantage to you." On Confucius, despite this seeming asperity, perhaps indeed because of it, he evidently produced a profound impression, but whether of admiration or perplexity is not clear. Speaking of Lao, he afterwards said, "I know how birds can fly, how fishes swim, and how animals can run. But the runner may be snared, the swimmer may be hooked, and the flier may be shot by the arrow. But there is the dragon. I cannot tell how he mounts on the wind through the clouds, and rises to heaven. To-day I have seen Lao-tsz, and can only compare him to the dragon."

Both men were Government officers, Lao being in the Imperial Capital, in the office of Archives and Astrology, his rival holding a post in Shantung, under the Duke of Lu. Both were deeply impressed with the license and disorganisation of their times, and zealous for their country's welfare. Lao, in despair, and feeling the weight of years, finally gave up the attempt to improve matters, and withdrew from the world. Confucius, being younger and more hopeful, remained amongst his fellows, and sought, though vainly, to influence the rulers of his day to adopt his principles of life and government.

At that time, though there was a nominal emperor, or Son of Heaven, the country was divided into a host of petty states, in frequent strife one with another, much as was the case in our own feudal period. It still lacked nearly three centuries to the days of the imperious and eternally hated Shih Huang-ti, who during the third century B.C., in the blood of untold millions of his subjects, put down these kings or barons, and united their numerous states into one vast empire, an empire which, despite many changes of dynasty, continues to the present day.

During the period that intervened between the death of Confucius and the advent of this Napoleon of China, the sage's disciples had planted deep the roots of their master's teaching, so that notwithstanding the adoption by Shih of

the already degenerated Taoist system, the slaughter of the sage's followers, and the destruction of all the Confucius records he could find, yet even Shih Huang-ti was unable to uproot the cult he opposed. From the death of Shih until now, though there have been crowned emperors to the number of nearly three hundred, Confucius has ever remained the uncrowned King of China, and such he is likely to remain till the King with the Crown of Thorns raises this people to adore at a nobler shrine.

Of Lao-tsz, the Venerable Philosopher, or, as some say, Philosopher Old, and as others, with literal authority, the "Old Boy," little is known. His clan name was Li, "Plum," and his personal name was Ur, "Ear," a cognomen, as his posthumous name of Tan, or "Flat Ear" implies, probably arising from something unusual in the size or shape of that organ; hence the name Li Ur may be taken to mean "Plum the Eared." Modern Taoists say that his mother carried him eighty years in her womb, and that he was born with white hair and a wrinkled face, a boy of eighty! The white hair and wrinkled face are commonly shown in the images we find of him in the various Taoist temples. When he withdrew from the world, possibly to join other anchorites amongst the mountains, he was asked at the frontier of Hankuh to write and leave behind him a treatise for the guidance of his followers. This is the sole authentic relic in existence of one whom his disciples have canonised as the principal god or "saint" in their trinity.

Concerning Confucius we have more abundant material. The name thus spelt is the form, as latinised by the early Catholic missionaries, of the Chinese title K'ung Fu-tsz, the philosopher K'ung, or "Hole." His personal name was Ch'iu, a mound, so given in consequence of a protuberance on his forehead. Though of royal descent he was born in only moderate circumstances in the northern kingdom of Lu, the modern Shantung. His father was a military officer "of great prowess and daring bravery," who having nine daughters by his first wife, but never a son, married when over seventy a young woman who became the mother of the sage. When three years old his father died. At nineteen he himself married and had a son. About the same time

he found employment as controller of a state granary, and some years later became noticeable as a philosopher, to whom a number of young men had attached themselves.

While diligent in the performance of his public duties, he found time to adopt and prosecute his great life task of collecting and editing the ancient records, historical, religious, poetic, and philosophic; and of inculcating the principles he evolved therefrom into his disciples. On returning from a visit to the Imperial Capital, where he had his famous interview with Lao-tsz, he was appointed Chief Magistrate of Chuntu, and so effectively did he administer his duties there that the Duke of Lu raised him to the high office of Minister of Justice, when he "became the idol of the people and flew in songs through their mouths."

For a time it seemed as if his doctrines would win immediate success, but the increased prestige accruing to the duke in consequence of the successful government of Confucius, prompted a jealous neighbouring ruler to divert the duke's attention, and spoil the work of the sage. He sent the duke a present of eighty attractive girls, whose charms and graces and beautiful faces easily prevailed over the prosaic principles of the philosopher; and he, finding his counsels disregarded, reluctantly withdrew from the court. He had now reached his fifty-sixth year, yet bravely he went forth with a handful of disciples, wandering from state to state, and from ducal court to ducal court, in the hope of finding somewhere a prince willing to put his rules of government into practice. These rules may in brief be summed up in his own words:—

"From the Son of Heaven down to the masses, there is one law, that each must consider personal cultivation as of radical importance."

"When the ruler, as a father, a son, and a brother, is a model, then the people imitate him," hence, "the government of his kingdom depends on the regulation of his family."

"In a state, not gain, but righteousness is to be considered prosperity."

"The administration of government lies in getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler's own character. That character is to be cultivated by his tread-

ing in the ways of duty. And the treading those ways of duty is to be cultivated by the cherishing of consideration for others."

"The sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character. Wishing to cultivate his character he may not neglect to serve his parents. In order to serve his parents he may not neglect to acquire a knowledge of men. In order to know men he may not dispense with a knowledge of heaven."

"The duties of universal obligation are five, and the virtues with which they are practised are three. The duties are those between sovereign and minister, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brother, and friend with friend. Knowledge, magnanimity, courage (or boldness), these three are the virtues universally binding."

"He who knows these three things knows how to cultivate his own character. Knowing how to cultivate his own character, he knows how to govern other men. Knowing how to govern other men, he knows how to govern the empire with all its states and families."

"All who have the government of the empire, with its states and families, have nine standard rules to follow—viz., the cultivation of their own characters; the honouring of men of virtue and talents; affection towards their own relatives (or parents); respect towards the great ministers; kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers; dealing with the mass of the people as children (in fatherly fashion); encouraging the resort of all classes of artisans; indulgent treatment of men from a distance; and the kindly cherishing of the princes of the states."

"Self-adjustment and purification, with careful regulation of his dress, and the not making a movement contrary to the rules of propriety — this is the way for the ruler to cultivate his person. Discarding slanders, and keeping himself from the seductions of beauty; making light of riches, and giving honour to virtue;—this is the way for him to encourage men of worth and talents. Giving them places of honour and large emolument, and sharing with them in their likes and dislikes — this is the way to encourage his relatives to love him. Giving them numerous officers to

discharge their orders and commissions—this is the way for him to encourage the great ministers. According to them a generous confidence and making their emoluments large—this is the way to encourage the body of officers. Employing them only at the proper times, and making the imposts light—this is the way to encourage the people. By daily examinations and monthly trials, and by making their rations accord with their labours—this is the way to encourage the classes of artisans. To escort them on their departure and meet them coming, to commend the good among them, and show compassion to the incompetent—this is the way to treat indulgently men from a distance," etc.

Confucius died at the age of seventy-two, without having met the prince who was prepared to follow his teaching, and without having seen his principles accepted by his fellow-countrymen. There is something pathetic in the thought of this fine, upright, albeit somewhat pedantic old man, who had toiled and wandered through weary years—his life at times in danger—only to meet disappointment in the end. Could he have foreseen the way in which succeeding generations have exalted himself rather than his principles, it is probable that his disappointment would have been even greater. Suffice it that, in so far as it was revealed to him, he nobly did his duty to his generation. After death he was buried in his native province of Shantung, near to the great Tai Mountain, where his grave remains to this day; and is, as has been already stated, under the conserving care of his descendant, Duke K'ung, whose three-thousand-year old genealogical tree is probably the most ancient and most complete on earth. Unlike Lao-tze—the date and place of whose death is unknown—he left behind him in his Pentateuch enough to make him famous through all time, and his disciples added to his well-earned fame in the "Four Books" composed by them after his death, wherein his teaching is summarised and supplemented.

It may be said, then, that the native religion of China had existed for ages before the advent of Confucius and Lao-tze; that its chief exponent and reformer was Confucius, the "transmitter and not creator"; and that Lao-tze was the unintentional founder of a school of mystics and spiritual-

ists, who have cultivated and added to the ancient superstitions, and whose extravagances have resulted in Taoism being classified, by the present dynasty, under the list of heretical sects.

The disciples of both schools all follow the state religion, the Confucianists, in addition, officially sacrificing to the sage, even as the Taoists unofficially pay their highest honours to Lao-tze, and to a host of their own particular divinities. If, therefore, the state or orthodox religion of China be called, as it generally is, Confucianism, then all Taoists are in a sense Confucianist also, for they worship the orthodox deities in addition to their own. It should however be noted that Confucianists are by no means all Taoists. The situation somewhat resembles that of Methodism a century and a half ago, when all Methodists were members of the Church of England, for all communicated there, but all Church of England people were by no means Methodists. In like manner, while the Buddhists may be Confucianists and Taoists at one and the same time, Confucianists and Taoists are very far from being all followers of Buddha. As a matter of fact Confucianism is not a Chinese term at all; it is of European invention, and strictly speaking should be limited to the "School of the Learned"—the Ju Chiao; for convenience' sake it is applied by Europeans to the first of the three native cults (Ju, Shih and Tao), to indicate the state religion. The two latter, Buddhists and Taoists, are "Dissenters" in China, just as are also Mohammedans and Christians.

XVI

THE NATIVE RELIGIONS: CONFUCIANISM

'The unknown God."

HAVING in the previous chapter given some account of the two great Chinese leaders, while reserving Taoism for a separate chapter, let us now consider what is the state religion of China, commonly called Confucianism.

It is with modern Confucianism that we have to deal, which, while not greatly differing in its principles from the Master's teaching, varies in detail very widely from its ancient form. Just as in Roman Christianity there exists much that is foreign to the New Testament, so is it with Confucianism, in which the accretions have been both many and great. But, even as Romanism cannot fairly be treated without a study of the early records of Christianity, neither can Confucianism be dealt with apart from its ancient creed.

First, then, from the earliest times Confucianism has recognised the existence of a supreme being, who is called *Shen*, or *Ti*, or more usually *Shang Ti*, the Above Ruler or Over King. He is also often indicated by the impersonal *T'ien*, Heaven. Shang Ti, or T'ien may only be sacrificed to by the emperor, the Son of Heaven, for not until the advent of the Divine Son of Man is it possible for men in truth to realise that they too are the sons of heaven, with equal rights before the majesty on high.

Every year at the winter solstice, seated "in his state car, and escorted by about two thousand grandees, princes, musicians and attendants," the emperor makes a solemn

procession from his palace to the Imperial Temple of Heaven. There, at midnight, after three nominal days of fasting and prayer, he ascends the majestic three-tiered circular altar of white marble, which stands under the azure heavens in the centre of its immense park. Before the tablet of Shang Ti he bows in worship, and in addition to oblations of silk, grain, jade, sheep, pigs, and other small animals, he offers up "a burnt offering of a whole bullock—entire and without blemish." The spirit tablet of Shang Ti, a strip of wood with the great name inscribed on it, is placed at one end of the altar, and down each side are ranged the spirit tablets of the imperial ancestors, who are thereby invited to be present and bear the Almighty Guest company at this royal banquet.

Idolatry is conspicuously absent from the imperial sacrifice, whether at the round altar to heaven, or at the square altar to earth, which is situated in a park co-extensive with that of the altar to heaven, and separated from it by the majestic carriage way which lies between the two temples. Indeed, the making of idols seems to have been unknown in China until the advent of Buddhism. As already shown, to this day no image of Confucius is worshipped in the sage's temples; the tablet or "spirit throne," like the cross in a ritualistic church, being the only visible object before which sacrifice is offered.

Nevertheless the imperial worship is by no means monotheistic, for, in addition to the worship of heaven and earth, a host of other divinities is also annually worshipped. The emperor, either in person or by proxy, regularly offers sacrifices in their various temples to the spirits of the hills and the rivers; to the spirits controlling such elements as rain and snow, fire and thunder; to the sun, moon and certain stars; to his own lares and penates; and, of course, to his ancestors; to Confucius also, and certain national heroes who have been canonised; to the principal Taoist and Buddhist divinities, and to as many more as circumstances render advisable; for it is always well for even the emperor to please everybody, if he can, and especially to keep on good terms with all the "powers of the air." If only Christians were not so unreasonable, and would apply for the

admission of Jesus Christ into the imperial pantheon, probably no objection would be raised to the addition!

The orthodox objects of worship in the ancient religion of China may be briefly described in the words of Confucius' "Record of Rites," translated by Dr Legge as follows:—

"The Son of Heaven sacrificed to heaven and earth; to (the rulers of) the four quarters, to the (spirits of all the) hills and rivers; and offered the five (domestic) sacrifices; —all in the course of the year.

"The feudal princes sacrificed to (the rulers of) their several quarters; to the (spirits of their) hills and rivers; and offered the five (domestic) sacrifices;—all in the course of the year.

"Great officers offered the five (domestic) sacrifices;— all in the course of the year.

"Other officers sacrificed to their forefathers." And this last sacrifice was open to all, "from the Son of Heaven down to the common people."

The state religion of the present day has, however, one great principle, which has been referred to in Chapter XV, and which permits of being summed up in a sentence. According to this principle the unseen world is formed exactly on the model of the Chinese empire; in other words the universe consists of two parts, the Chinese empire below, and the Chinese empire on a larger scale above. As there is one Emperor, or Huang Ti, over all the earth, who is the Son of Heaven, and under whom are ranked all the officers of earthly government, so is there an emperor, Shang Ti, in Heaven at the head of all the spirit rulers. As on earth there are ministers and officers of all grades, so in the unseen world are there spirit officers, who, like their earthly counterparts, have charge each over his own district. Strangely enough the deification, appointment and transfer from post to post of these spirit rulers, is in the hands of the earthly emperor, and not of the King above.

Again, as on earth there are yamens, prisons, tortures, so in the spirit world is there the great yamen of the Chinese Pluto, including his "earth prison" or hell, with its host of judges, lictors, torturers and sufferers, administering or suffering all the horrors that the Chinese mind can imagine.

Nor can the people be accused of bad logic when they argue from all this that, as there are yamen runners on earth, ever on the look out for plunder, and who of necessity have to be "squared," so in the spirit world are there demon runners ever trying to injure the individual, and surely it is not wise to be on bad terms with them, when a few occasional offerings will keep them quiet!

This latter view the monks, both Taoist and Buddhist, are only too ready to exploit to their own pecuniary advantage. Nor need they limit their enterprise to the poor and ignorant, for the Confucian scholar, mandarin, prince, and emperor are as full of superstition as the uneducated. Wherever one goes the Pa-kua, or octagonal divining frame of the Confucian classics is met with, just as is the cross in southern Europe, and the horse-shoe in some unenlightened parts of England. Doors have pictures of the door gods painted on them, or at least a charm of some sort affixed, and amulets of many kinds are carried on the person, even by the learned, all for the purpose of turning away the powers of evil. For, while the Confucian literate will sometimes laugh a sceptical laugh, as Roman Augurs did over the quivering entrails of their divinatory sheep, he still deems it discreet to yield to the common superstitions of his race, even though he take no conspicuous part therein. Nor is he in this respect a disobedient follower of his Master, who told him to "serve the spirits, and keep them at a distance."

The consequence of this system of religion is that every mandarin in charge of a district, whether it be a huge province or a small township, must, in virtue of his office, worship his spirit colleague. Twice a month, he presents himself before these Chinese deceased partiots, who have been imperially deified, and appointed to act with him in controlling the seen and unseen world in his particular locality. From which it is manifest that until the law is altered, the principal civil offices of this empire can never be filled by Christians. Some there may be, who, like Naaman, bow before Rimmon, in their hearts believing something nobler, but their loftier faith is a secret thing, and their baser service is open and manifest.

As to the common people, while the Confucian code limits

their sacrifices to the household gods and to the spirits of their ancestors, yet in extremity, all the Chinese, from time immemorial, have in their hour of stress and peril made spontaneous appeal to high heaven, and with streaming eyes and outstretched hands sought the aid of the Father Whom they know not, for just as Shang-ti is the emperor's final Court of Appeal, so is high heaven that of his people. Confucius, indeed, by his own example, showed that he considered the ear of heaven to be open to the cry of all men ; and Mencius definitely taught that " even though a man be evil, he too, with dishevelled locks, and a cleansed body, may serve Shang-ti." While, however, all may make their appeal to heaven, and worship heaven and earth, none but the emperor may offer sacrifices thereto. These are the highest token of his sovereignty. For another to offer them would imply a claim to the throne, with consequent civil war, for just as there can only be one Shang Ti above, so there can only be one Huang-ti (emperor) below. Western sovereigns, Christianity apart, are giving a rude shock to the latter notion, and with the fall thereof much else will fall, not excluding this wonderful theological system, so logical, if only it had not feet of clay.

Whatever else the common or uncommon Chinaman worships, on no account may he overlook the correct sacrifice to the spirits of his forefathers. In the same way that Pope tells us that " the proper study of mankind is man," so the Confucian code instructs the Chinaman that pre-eminently, the proper worship of mankind is man, either in the shape of the deceased national worthy, or of the departed ancestor. It may indeed fairly be said that ancestral worship is the only universal article in the Confucian creed, and a Chinaman might be readily conceived as saying, " I believe in my ancestors, and that it is my duty to offer incense twice a month before their spirit thrones, and to sacrifice at least once a year to them, good, bad, and indifferent." Such is the State religion of China for the private individual. In addition, he may worship a heaven full of gods and a hell full of devils if he will, but the man who refuses " to provide for those of his own house " is worse than an infidel. The man who merely neglects ancestral sarcifices is too common

for notice, but he who refuses—as in the case of a Christian, —what is he but a gentile, a pagan, a giaour, an atheist ?

Nor, as has been seen, is the emperor exempt from this universal article of faith. To his ancestors he also must sacrifice, as to them he is responsible for the way in which he maintains the empire they have handed down to him. In like manner, also, is each male member of the household supposed to be responsible to his ancestors for the maintenance of the family. The ancestor has become the god to whom account must be given. Nor does the ancestor always await the arrival of the descendant in the spirit world for punishment or reward. To the delinquent he may bring sickness, bad harvests, bad trade, and a multitude of other evils ; a somewhat unusual manner of maintaining a family ; still, there must be some explanation for these untoward events, and why not put the blame on the unfilial son and the stern ancestor ?

In every clan,—and often a village of five thousand inhabitants belongs to the same clan,—there are three forms of ancestral worship. First in importance comes the annual clan sacrifice in the large temple, which every male member of the clan is entitled to attend. This encourages the visit of relatives who have removed to a distance, and helps them to keep up their connection with old relatives and friends. At the annual clan sacrifices only the ancestors common to all are worshipped. Secondly, there are the subsidiary sacrifices in the branch temples, when the ancestors common to each branch are severally worshipped. Thirdly, there are the family sacrifices, when the family makes its offerings to its own immediate progenitors.

These are all times of reunion, and should be times of dignified rejoicing, but the temples are endowed, the temple-lands being cultivated by members of the clan seriatim, who, after providing the sacrifices, are allowed to pocket the surplus income. Herein lies cause for not infrequent wrangles. Moreover, the Chinaman is above all things economical, and naturally looks upon whole-burnt offerings as wicked waste. Therefore, although the ancestors are allowed to sniff the fragrance of the offerings, the worshippers take good care to draw the line there ; for, when the genuflexions are over, all sit down and, with resounding enjoyment dispose of the

flesh, the wine and the steaming bowls of rice. Glowing faces soon shine ruddily on every side, and, what with fuel in the shape of temple incense, and fire in the form of sacrificial wine, no wonder that the eyes of the ancestral spirits are occasionally shocked by seeing the distorted visages of their descendants, and their ears by listening to the grossest mutual abuse, in which the poor maternal progenitors of the respective parties have plentiful cause to hide their blushing faces.

Human nature is as human in China as elsewhere, and the host of the indifferent and the negligent would be mightily swelled were there no emoluments connected with the service. Nevertheless, ancestral worship is the most formidable obstacle, save indifference, that this land presents to the spread of Christianity. Remembering this fact, and that there is much that is attractive in the idea of family reunion, it is not matter for the least surprise that the Jesuits permitted their converts to take their full share in those ceremonies. Nor are there lacking Protestant missionaries who also maintain that Chinese Christians ought not to be called upon to excommunicate themselves from the clan assemblies. Such men view the meeting as a family gathering, and the offerings in the light of a memorial feast. As to kneeling before the picture of the ancestor, if the son did so when his father was alive, why not now? They argue, besides, that the growing influence of Christian teaching would purge this interesting ceremony of everything superstitious or harmful, and change it into a healthy and beneficial occasion. In some places, where Christians are numerous and on good terms with their fellow clansmen, an arrangement has been made whereby the Christian may take his turn in cultivating the temple endowment, provide the feast, and be present thereat but allow some unconverted member of the clan to make the offering. In other places, excommunication from all clan rights has taken place, and the Christian's name been expunged from the clan register, involving him in serious loss, suffering and disgrace.

To sum up then, the state religion of China, or Confucianism so-called, while recognising the existence of a Supreme Being, gives itself up chiefly to nature worship, and to the

CONFUCIAN TEMPLE, PEKING

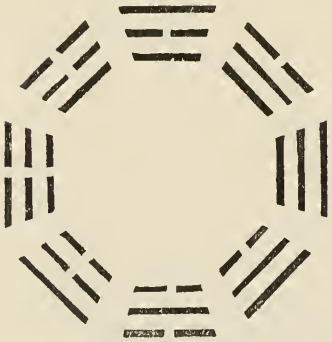
adoration of sages, heroes, and ancestors. No graven image of God, of Confucius, or of the ancestor is permitted; and yet influences, modern rather than ancient, and probably emanating from Buddhism, have made the State religion one of the most idolatrous on earth, for not only are the State temples filled with idols of every description, but every street has its shrine and in palace and hovel the household gods are always found. Animal sacrifices are regularly offered, the pig and the goat being the chief sacrificial victims. A priesthood is unknown, though Taoist and Buddhist monks are sometimes employed as caretakers. Sacrifices are not expiatory, but propitiatory, or simply oblations. The existence of the soul after death is clearly recognised by the fact that most of their gods have been men, and this along with ancestral worship are a missionary's most effective argument in favour of the continuation of the soul in another sphere. Rewards and punishments are admitted by Confucius, though chiefly falling in this life upon the individual or his descendants, much as was the case under the Mosaic Law, but, in later periods, through Taoist and Buddhist channels, probably emanating from Christian sources, great stress has also been placed upon reward and punishment in the life hereafter.

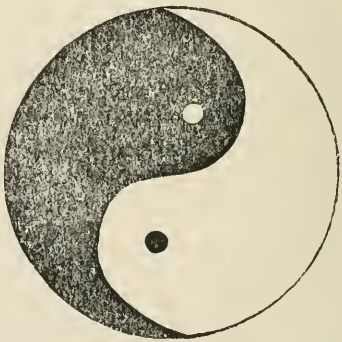
That the Confucianists have extolled their Master extravagantly need cause no surprise, rather it may incite sympathy. Very much isolated from and independent of the rest of the world, and living in ignorance of their own ignorance, they have scarcely heard of any other sage save their own, to whom they owe more for practical guidance than to any or all the philosophers their land has produced. What the Israelites owed to Moses for his loftier teaching, that the Chinese owe in proportionate measure to Confucius. He it was who showed them the way out of a wilderness of gross superstitions into the fairer land of a spiritual worship, a worship free from the orgies of Greece and Rome, infinitely more humane than the monstrosities of India, and one that knows nothing of the fanaticism of the Arabian prophet. He it was who showed them the glories of justice, righteousness and benevolence, and who gave them as the key to life the word "Reciprocity," or in the words of his golden rule, "Do not unto others what you would not have them do

to you." And he it was who, though "not knowing life," and therefore declining to discuss death and the hereafter, yet, by the worship of ancestors, continued to the Chinese their hope of immortality.

That the Chinese have not lived up to their privileges, but perverted to idolatry and gross superstition, cannot be laid at the door of Confucius, any more than the failure of Israel to follow his teaching can be charged against Moses, or the sinful shortcomings of the Christian Church towards the pagan world be attributed to Our Lord and Saviour. Prosaic, matter-of-fact, no dreamer of dreams or seer of visions, he has been the safest guide this people has possessed. Superstitious though they are, they would have been even worse but for him, and his moral rectitude and acknowledgement of a power above, has made him a not unworthy forerunner of Christ to this spiritually helpless mass of humanity. Not knowing the Father, and all the wealth with which that word was filled by Our Lord, he could not proclaim Him. That is why we are sent. To his formal morals we have little to add, but to those informal morals which are impossible of codification, save as Our Master did so on the Mount of Beatitudes and on the cross, we can make the all-powerful addition of Spirit and Life.

COSMOLOGICAL IDEAS[1]





[1] See Legge's "Yi King"; also Canon MacClatchie's "Yih King," and his "Confucian Cosmogony."

These two figures contain within them the body and soul of Chinese Philosophy. They are believed to express all the laws of heaven and earth, of gods and men. There is, indeed nothing that does not come within the bounds of their interpretation, and he who can fathom their mysterious significance may rule men as easily as turning the palm of the hand upwards. Here is the key of all philosophy, here the centre and circumference of all wisdom. I once heard a Chinaman say that it would be a pity if foreigners obtained possession of the " Book of Changes,"—which treats on the first of these figures—as, being clever people, they would speedily find out its interpretation, and rob China of her birthright.

Two thousand five hundred years ago Confucius gave much earnest study to the first of the above symbols, and in his old age longed to give more, in order to unlock the mysteries of nature, and attain to the highest virtue. To-day these figures still front us in every city street, and in every hamlet, where they are chiefly employed for bewildering spirits and bringing in lucky influences; and these same symbols still, as of yore, provide the geomancer, the necromancer and every other mancer with his principal instrument for telling the fates and forecasting the future. Let us not, however, look scornfully upon this rusty old key, with which the ancients sought to unlock the secret chambers of God, for it is the fate of philosophic keys to grow rusty, and even our own, yesterday so bright and polished, has since the discovery of radio-activity, begun to wear its coat of brown, and will soon be discarded for a better.

The first figure is known as the Pa-kua, or eight-sided divining diagram. The second is known as the Great Extreme or the Great Monad, representing the Cosmic protoplasm, the Ovum Mundi of the ancients. As to the Pa-kua, the Chinese believed it to have been divinely revealed by a " dragon-horse " or a tortoise, to Fu-she, the reputed founder of the Chinese nation, whose reign is placed three thousand years before Christ. Its real origin may have been in Babylonia—unless indeed all Western philosophy, like everything else of value, had its origin in China! Canon MacClatchie considers the octagon to be related to the ogdoad

of Western mythologists, the father, mother, three sons and three daughters who founded the human race, as in the case of Noah, and as some say of Adam, for these eight family relationships, amongst numerous other terms are applied to the respective sides of the diagram.[1]

At first each side consisted of three whole or divided lines, the divided line representing the negative or maternal principle, and the whole or undivided one the converse. A process of reduplication increased the three lines to six, making a combination of sixty-four possible. These varying combinations make the "changes" which give its name to the book above-mentioned, the common property of Confucianist and Taoist. These lines indicate the revolutions which are the order of the universe in all its vast variety, and the Book of Metamorphoses, or Book of Changes as it is generally called, is the medium through which the hidden meaning of these transmutations may be understood by men. The two figures, especially the second, have in later times been taken to represent the Ovum Mundi, or Chaos, which on every secular destruction of the universe is conserved, along with its four pairs of human beings, for the formation of a new heaven and a new earth.

Fu-she's notes on his Pa-kua, if any, must have been of the briefest. About B.C. 1150 they were either edited or supplemented by King Wan while he was a prisoner, and to his son he bequeathed the task of completing what he had begun. Six centuries later Confucius edited the compilation, and himself added another commentary, carrying the principles of his predecessors into his own special realm, the kingdom of morals. Many are the men who since his day have philosophised over its abstruse contents, but the modern interpretation was not fixed until more than sixteen centuries after Confucius had himself made man's great metamorphosis. Then in A.D. 1170, China's most famous commentator, Chu Fu-tsz, whose interpretations of all the classics are to this day the orthodoxy of the land, added to his own annotations a valuable treatise on what he deemed to be its teaching.

Before the days of Chu, however, Hindu ideas had been

[1] The great authority Dr Legge disputes such an inference, but gives no satisfactory explanation of this interesting combination.

widely promulgated in China, and it is possible that cosmological notions from still further west had filtered in, chiefly through Arabian and Nestorian channels. Taoist writers also, who have ever formed an influential liberal school, were not without influence on Chu, for he is known to have given earnest attention in his early years to their productions, as well as to those of the Buddhists. Hence, his philosophy is probably coloured from sources neither purely Chinese nor strictly Confucian. Nevertheless, his treatise, difficult of comprehension though it is, gives the ablest conspectus of native ideas that China knows.

First, then, the later Confucian philosophy asserts the eternity of matter as well as the eternity of mind. Our own scriptures have not trammelled us with any dogma either of the eternity or non-eternity of matter—nor indeed have the writings of Confucius, who instead of philosophising confined himself chiefly to morals—for when we read in the Bible that God created the heavens and the earth, we are left free to believe that it is the form which is spoken of rather than the substance, indeed the physicist is beginning to find it more difficult to describe what he means by matter than the psychologist what he means by soul. Primordial matter is named Ch'i, literally, air, breath, ether. Within this dwells an inherent *primum mobile* called Li, literally, law, principle. Chu Fu-tsz tells us that " in the whole universe there is no such thing as Ch'i without Li, or Li without Ch'i." This " Li " he describes elsewhere as another name for the ruling power, or God, Who fills all creation, pervades the whole universe, and in Whom all things consist,

A great difference of opinion exists amongst European writers as to what the Confucian school mean by God. In regard to the two terms used, Shen and Shang Ti, or simply Ti, one class of writers considers that Shang Ti or Ti are synonymous with Shen. Another school, of which Canon MacClatchie was the ablest exponent, holds that Shang Ti is both the universe and its demiurge, and that beyond Shang Ti lies the real God over all, the utmost God, (Chih Shen) Who also pervades this great hermaphrodite, Shang Ti. This view is utterly repugnant to the former class of writers, and it is certainly difficult to find anything in the original

Confucian writings which lends colour to such an interpretation. In this sense Ti, *i.e.*, Shang Ti, is considered to be the Chinese Zeus, or Jupiter, and the phonetical resemblance to these two Greek and Latin terms, as well as to the cognates Dyaus, Tiu, Zio (one might almost add theos and deus) deserves note.

This school of translators tells us that just as the Chinese view man as soul and body, so they view the heaven and earth as an animated head and body, Ti, *i.e.*, Shang Ti, the Supreme Ruler, being the immanent and all-permeating Soul. Hence the Chinese sayings, "The living Heaven and the living Earth," and "Man is a miniature Heaven, Heaven is a magnified Man," are taken literally. Therefore also everything is Shang Ti in some form or other, and every object worshipped is part of God. As Chu says: "The one Mind runs through all, the one Matter forms all." Mind and matter are "certainly two different things, yet, in looking at anything, the two are blended together, and cannot be separated."

Shang Ti, by this school, is also looked upon as the "T'ai I," or "Great Monad," who "divides in order to form heaven and earth, and gyrates in order to produce light and darkness." He is thus the body and soul of all creation, "One, and yet all things; all things, and yet one." The system, being pantheistic, is therefore monotheistic, in that He is the One of whom and in whom all things consist, gods and men alike. Needless to say these philosophisings of the later Confucian school are limited to the few, for, as Professor Flint points out, pantheism "has never been in itself the religion of any people. It has never been more than the philosophy of certain speculative individuals." China like "India has been no exception, for even there, in order to gain and retain the people, pantheism has had to combine with polytheism."

Matter, or ether, is divided by its inherent Principle into a duality, known from ancient times as Yin and Yang. As the word Yin resembles the Yoni of the Hindus (probably the Juno or Dione of Europe), and as the word Yang resembles the Langa of the Hindus, Canon MacClatchie has inferred a similarity in their meaning, a view strongly objected to by

Dr Legge and others, who find no trace of phallic worship in Confucianism. Yang is Heaven, Light, the Sun, Hard, the positive or paternal principle. Yin is Earth, Darkness, the Moon, Soft, the negative or maternal principle. Hence the imperial sacrifices at the round altar of heaven and the square altar of earth, are considered by the former school to be the worship of the Animated Universe, or Shang Ti as generator of all—a view denied by the other, who consider the Shang Ti of the classics to be a spiritual being separate and distinct from matter. Yin and Yang are undoubtedly used in the generative sense, but their original meaning being Sun and Moon, the ruling powers of day and night, they have become words of wide philosophic use for expressing antitheses, as, subject and object, good and evil, upper and lower, motion and rest.

In regard to creation, Chu Fu-tsz tells us that "In the beginning heaven and earth were just the Yin and Yang ether. This one ether revolved, grinding round and round. When it ground quickly much sediment was compressed, which having no means of exit, coagulated and formed the earth in the centre. The clear part of the ether then became heaven, the sun, the moon and the stars, which unceasingly revolve on the outside. The earth then remained in the centre motionless, but it is not below the centre. Heaven revolves unceasingly, night and day it turns round, hence the earth remains exactly in the centre. If heaven stood still for an instant then the earth would sink down, but heaven revolves with speed, hence much sediment coagulates in the centre. The earth is this sediment of the ether."

"At the beginning of heaven and earth, before Chaos was divided (Gen. i. 2, 7), I think there were only two elements, fire and water, and the sediment of the water formed the earth. When we ascend a height and look down, the host of hills have the appearance of the sea. The water just flowed like this, but I do not know at what period it coagulated."

Some one remarked that from the creation to the present day was not ten thousand years, and wished to know how it was before that time. He replied "Before that there was

another clear opening (*i.e.*, another heaven and earth), like the present one." Being further asked whether heaven and earth can utterly perish he replied, "They cannot, but mankind totally degenerates, then the whole shall be smitten back into Chaos, and men and things shall cease to exist; and then everything shall begin anew."

He was asked how the first man was generated, and replied, "By the transmutations of the ether; the essence of the Yin and Yang and of the five material elements united and produced his form."

"Before this present period there was another world-creation, and before that there was yet another, so that Motion and Rest, Yin and Yang, have no beginning. As little things shadow forth great things, this may be illustrated by the revolutions of day and night. What Wu-fung says about the great cessation of the entire ether, the vast and boundless agitation of all things, the whole expanse of waters changing position, the mountains bursting asunder, the channels being obliterated, men and things all coming to an end, and the ancient vestiges all being destroyed—all this refers to the utter destruction of the world by Deluge. We frequently see, on lofty mountains, the shells of the sea-snail and pearl-oyster as it were generated in the middle of stones these stones were (part of) the soil of the former world."

"Heaven embraces earth, and his ether penetrates every part, so that the whole is heaven." "Beneath the earth is also heaven." "Heaven and earth have no external, hence their form has limits, while their ether has no limit." "Outside the ether there must also be a most thick shell by which it is kept firm." "If heaven were bright, then the sun and moon could not give any light; but heaven is not bright, the darkness of midnight is the real colour of heaven." "The sun travels as much space above the earth as below."

"We must not assert that the Mind of heaven and earth is not spiritual; but it does not think or concern itself about matters as man does." "Heaven and earth have no other occupation than merely to exercise Mind in generating things." "Heaven and earth with this Mind pervade the Myriad of things; man obtains it, and it is then the Mind of man;

Things obtain it, and then it is the Mind of things; Grass, Trees, Birds, and Beasts, obtain it and then it is the mind of Grass, Trees, Birds, and Beasts; this is just the one Mind of heaven and earth."

"To say that heaven has a person up there who judges good and evil; we must not assert this. To say there is nothing whatever which rules it, we also must not assert." As to the "heaven" of the classics, he says, "In some places the azure sky is meant, in others the Ruling Power, and in others Law (*Li*) is meant."

"Heaven by his ether revolves outside, and hence earth is, in fact, in his midst, steady and without motion." He does not consider that there are nine different heavens, but that "Heaven has nine (spiral) spheres." "Earth, although she is firm, is yet hollow; and therefore heaven's ether flows forth into the midst of the earth, and issues forth from the interior of the earth."

"There must be a governing Power which causes motion. This idea men must for themselves see into, words cannot exhaustively treat of it."

In response to a question he replied, "Since heaven and earth have form and ether (or substantial form), how can they avoid perishing? But, after each destruction, there is a fresh generation."

"Good and evil are both heavenly principles, and we cannot assert that evil is not also nature (as well as good is)." That is, just as Li (Law) is incomplete with only Yang without Yin, so evil and evil things such as "serpents, scorpions, weeds, and poisons" are necessary to a complete Cosmos.

As in the Platonic writings so in the Confucian, God is spoken of as "the Good," and as He who "adorns the myriad things."

It is beyond the province of this book to give anything but a brief synopsis of Confucian philosophy, but the above excerpts will show that the riddle of the Universe has stirred some in this nation to deep thought, and that in their speculations they have rivalled the ancient philosophers of the west. In their unguided gropings they have attained to some dim perception of the "Infinite," the "Good," the

"Adorning" God our Father, and have given utterance to conceptions noble and elevating. If, however, it were necessary for St Paul to go to Greece in spite of all its fine philosophy, equally so is it needful that we should "declare" to these thinkers of China the God, Whom they "ignorantly worship."

XVII

NATIVE RELIGIONS: TAOISM

"Hast thou heard the secret of God?"

BETWEEN Lao-tsz and Confucius there lies almost as wide a chasm as that which divides pure Confucianism from the grosser forms of Taoism. With all his excellencies Confucius scarcely taught his followers to lift their eyes above the common level; their meditations were to be solely of present life and earthly duty. But the eyes of Lao-tsz and a few of his immediate disciples sought the higher regions of philosophy; and their hearts were towards the eternal mysteries. Not satisfied with the hurry and fuss of mankind they would know the secret of the effectual quietness of heaven; not content with what their natural eyes beheld, they would probe with independent spirit into the cause and principle of things visible and invisible. Hence the name "Tao," which term seems to mean the eternal law or power by which all phenomena is produced, or, in the words of Dr Richard, "the mysterious and eternal powers working throughout nature and man."

Alas! the mass of the disciples of Lao-tsz long ago left the supernal heights, and to-day they scour the very depths of hell itself, whence they bring up devils that make heavy the life of man—and their own pockets also. From a research into the way of heaven Taoism has degenerated into a hopeless mass of fantastic superstitions, of haunted men and haunted houses, of spells and curses, charms and incantations, of wizards and immortals, witches and ghosts, of alchemy and magic, astrology and necromancy, of search after the drug of immortality and the philosopher's stone, of spiritualism and devil worship. Some disciples it may still have who, under the awe of the mysterious, follow in the footsteps

of their Master, and strive by searching to find out the nobler path; but few are their numbers and widely are they scattered.

Considered as a system of Philosophy, Taoism has always held much that is good within its circle, and even its magical school, if properly guided, might long ago have anticipated its European counter-type, and led the way into the realms of true science; might have changed astrology into astronomy, and alchemy into chemistry. But, considered as a system of supernaturalism, voicing the superstitions, ancient and modern, of the Chinese, it has had anything but a healthy influence, either upon its own professors, or upon the Confucian and Buddhist cults. Buddhism, itself, debased before it took root in China, introduced idolatry into the land, and chiefly under the influence of the Taoists, all three religions have multiplied their images and their gods, till it is now impossible to call their number or tell their names, or to thread the mazes of their genesis or their domain. Suffice it that the gods of China range from the God of high heaven to the goddess of the cesspool.

Ranked as a heresy and theoretically proscribed, Taoism is nevertheless perhaps the most influential religion in the land, its roots spreading into every phase of the nation's life. Most of the trade guilds have a Taoist divinity for their patron, very many of the Secret Societies which interpenetrate the myriad towns and hamlets are associated with it, and to its deceptions, its pretence of spirit possession, its preposterous claim for a magic wand that could ward off bullets, we and they owe the awful calamities of the fateful year 1900.

Taoism has had three principal periods, the period of its founder, Lao-tsz, B.C. 500, and of his only book, the Tao Te Ching; the period of Chang Tao Ling, A.D. 34, and his heirs; and the period of Lü Tung Pin, A.D. 755. The last lived in the province of Shansi, in touch with the Nestorian Christians, and probably through the influence of Christianity, he sought to lift the Taoists out of the search for the elixir of immortality in the physical kingdom, into the search for it in the "moral and spiritual" realm.

The first or philosophical period then, is that of the philo-

sopher Lao himself, of whose life a brief sketch has already been given. Of this period the Tao Te Ching is the chief text book. Here is a sample of its contents :—

" There was something chaotic and complete before the birth of heaven and earth. How still it was and formless, standing alone, and undergoing no change ; proceeding everywhere, and in no danger of being exhausted ! It may be regarded as the mother of all things. I do not know its name, but designate it Tao ; and forcing myself to frame a name for it, I call it Great. Great, it passes on, in constant flux ; so passing on, it becomes remote ; when remote, it comes back. Therefore Tao is great ; Heaven is great ; Earth is great ; the Sage (king) is also great. In the circle there are four that are great, and the (Sage) king is one of them. The (sage) man has for his law the earth ; the earth has heaven for its law ; heaven has Tao for its law ; and the law of Tao is its own spontaneity."

" We look at it and do not see it : it is named the colourless. We listen for it and do not hear it : it is named the soundless. We (try to) grasp it, and do not get hold of it : it is named the incorporeal. With these three qualities it cannot be investigated and defined ; and hence we blend them together and form a unity. Its upper part is not bright ; its lower part is not obscure. Ceaseless in its action, it (yet) cannot be named. (Finally) it reverts, and again becomes nothing. This is what is called the form of the formless, the image of the invisible. This is what is called being incapable of definition."

As Dr Legge, whose translation I am quoting, says :— " Many of his expressions are remarkable and tantalising. They promise to conduct us to the brink of a grand prospect, and then there is before us but a sea of mist. If Lao-tsz found it thus difficult to express his own idea of Tao, it is not to be marvelled at that students of his book, nearly 2500 years after him, should shrink from the attempt to define it."

Lao-tsz teaches the importance of " emptiness, or freedom from pre-occupation " as a condition of receptivity. This " emptiness " means freedom from " selfish motive or purpose centering in oneself." For it is " the empty space for the

axle" on which the use of the carriage wheel depends, and it is on "its empty hollowness that the use of a clay vessel depends." Doors and windows also depend for their usefulness on hollow spaces, just as a room depends for its usefulness upon its emptiness. Humility, or meekness, has a distinguished place in his teaching. He deprecates ambition, self-assertion, and even purposeful effort, urging the value of quietness and freedom from desire. Water is the emblem of Tao, in that it does not strive against natural tendency, but seeks the lowest place, "which all men dislike": moreover, though supple and weak, it yet overcomes the hard and strong.

He had "three precious things" which he highly prized. "The first is gentle compassion; the second, economy; the third (humility), not presuming to take precedence in the world. With gentle compassion I can be brave. With economy I can be liberal. Not presuming to claim precedence in the world, I can make myself a vessel fit for the most distinguished services. Nowadays they give up gentle compassion, and cultivate (mere physical) courage; they give up economy, and are lavish; they give up being last, and seek to be first:—of all which the end is death."

But Lao-tsz's greatest conception was that of returning good for evil. The way of Tao is "not to act from any personal motive; to conduct affairs without worrying; to account the great as small and the small as great; *to recompence injury with kindness.*"

Doubt has been expressed whether Lao-tsz knew anything of a personal God, or whether his book is not simply a Tao, or "Way" of living. But his Tao seems to be more than this. He himself says of it, "How deep it is, as if it were the author of all things!" And again later, "I do not know whose son it is. It might appear to have been even before Ti (God)."

Nevertheless, and judging from our sole guide, the Tao Te Ching, Laocius never had the remotest idea of founding a religion. He offers no object of worship, prescribes no mode of prayer or sacrifice, indicates no ceremonial forms; indeed, while a connection between the divine and human seems to be taken for granted, the whole subject of man's

personal relationship to God is left undefined. In his outlook on life Laocius has more in common with a man like Tolstoi than with Confucius the courtier. A vein of cynicism is not absent from his famous work, and a spirit of Stoicism runs throughout its meagre pages. How it ever came to form the basis of a "religion" at all is difficult to imagine.

As Socrates had his Plato, and Confucius his Mencius, so had Laocius his Chwang-tsz, whose works, wherein is much that is satirical, nevertheless contain many gems of thought, of which the following taken from Mr F. H. Balfour's Chwang-tsz may be cited as samples.

"The wisdom which enables a man to understand the ways of heaven springs from heaven itself." "The wise man draws his breath from his heels, while the vulgar herd breathe only in their gullets," hence, when "differences of opinion lead to brawling, the disputants are either unable to speak from choking, or, if their words find vent it is as if they were all vomiting," from which it is evident that the angry Chinaman of to-day is the exact counterpart of his great-grandfather of two thousand years ago. The wisdom of the wise man is described as "Tranquil amid Provocation." "In the face of opposition and abuse it still proceeds quietly in the accomplishment of its designs."

In regard to the existence of God he says, "It is almost as though there were a Supreme Being; but the first cause of all things is far beyond our reach. That there is one from whom I derive this power of motion I believe, but I have never seen his form. He has thoughts and feelings, but he has no shape." Then after pondering upon the constant preservation of his wonderfully organised frame he bursts out, "Verily there is One, Supreme, who holds all this together." "The whole of existence is a round of unceasing solicitude; its duties are never finished; all is weariness, anxiety, and fatigue; there is no knowing where it may all terminate. Alas! is not this enough to make one weep?" "But," he proceeds, "I conform to the teachings of Him who had the guiding of my heart. Who, indeed, is there without such a guide? Why need one understand all about the changes and revolutions of the world? All is clear to the heart that is thus taught, and

even the simplest and most ignorant are not left without instruction."

When dying, his last injunctions to his weeping relatives were to leave his corpse unburied. " I will have heaven and earth for my sarcophagus," said he, " the sun and moon shall be the insignia where I lie in state, and all creation shall be the mourners at my funeral." His friends implored him to forego this request, pointing out that the birds would mutilate his corpse ; but he replied, " What matters that ? Above are the birds of the air, below are the worms and ants ; if you rob one to feed the other, what injustice is there done ? "

The second period, the debasement of Taoism, dates from the first century of the Christian era, when Chang Tao Ling arose. He is said to have been born in this province of Chekiang. Later, his fame as a magician spread far and wide, reaching the capital, to which two successive emperors vainly invited him. Finally, having compounded his pill of immortality, he is reputed to have sought the realms of the immortals on the Dragon and Tiger Mountain, in the province of Kiang-si, and on that mountain his descendants, real or assumed, dwell in state to this day, as Popes of Taoism.

Let it not be thought that Chang introduced new ideas into China. He simply formed into some sort of system immemorial magical practices and divinations, and, being himself a man of magnetic power, succeeded in founding a school which was destined to become very powerful in the land. From a stone inscription erected by the Emperor Yung Ching, two centuries ago, in the " Temple of the Great Pure One on High," at the aforesaid Dragon and Tiger Hill, we are told that " Chang Tao Ling, Heaven's Teacher in the Han Dynasty, who sought immortality and obtained the way of life, and who received a secret revelation from the gods, by which he could control the action of evil spirits, and transform himself like the immortals, lived 123 years. His descendants have inherited his secret with the liturgies, charms, seals, and sword, which they (the Popes of Taoism) from age to age transmit to their successors, and make known through their abbots and disciples."

It goes on to say that this Lung-hu Shan is "the place where Heaven's Teacher (the Chief of Taoism) conserves his body, and practises the art of securing immortality, where the altar to the origin of all is, and where the pill of immortality is manufactured." It further says, "From the Later Han Dynasty till now (1500 years), the descendants of Chang Tao Ling continue and are able to practise his arts; they are loyal and spread his doctrine to drive away evil spirits and avert calamities, and because of their special devotion, they are able to comprehend things among the dead, and know all about good and evil spirits."

Of the third period of Taoism, that of Lü Tung Pin, little can be said, save that his teaching (according to Dr Timothy Richard), bears evidence of Christian influence, and that it restored, for a number of the thoughtful, the original search after Tao and immortality in the region of the soul.

Two schools of literature are found in this cult, the mystical and the magical, and two schools of disciples, the mystical numbering the few, and the magical numbering the many. Each branch of the canon, following the Confucian order of classical literature, has its four books, and five canons, for Taoism like the other religions in China is wonderfully imitative, and has lost its ancient independence and originality. The Tao Te Ching itself ranks of course in the mystical category.

One of the most popular of Taoist books is that on Rewards and Punishments, or Merit and Demerit. After a series of exhortations to right doing, a long list of virtuous and wicked deeds is given, with the number of good or bad marks allowed to each, and at the end of the book a blank calendar is exhibited, in which the disciple is urged to enter up his daily account, in order that he may work out a satisfactory monthly balance sheet. Let it not be assumed that much attention is paid to this account book; for the Chinese are as weak as other mortals, and the pursuit of account book righteousness is always of brief duration. Here are a few samples drawn from the book itself:—

For lending a lantern on a dark night 1 good mark.
For giving a successful dose of medicine „

For making a bridge, mending a road, clearing a canal, digging a well,— every hundred cash gives	1 good mark.
For saving a sick man	30 good marks.
For saving a life	100 good marks.
For breaking off another's marriage contract	100 bad marks.
For destroying an infant	100 bad marks.
For refusing to save a man's life	50 bad marks.
For heedlessly casting away human bones one may dig up	50 bad marks.

There are about five hundred such headings, some sensible, some childish, but it is possible for a sincere man, by following the instructions of this book, to order his ways both to his own and his neighbour's welfare; and the righteous man rejoices in the good wherever he finds it.

As to the superstitions connected with modern Taoism, a whole book might be filled with an account thereof. Three of them, however, may be stated briefly; namely, demon possession, calling back a lost soul, and cursing.

Demon Possession.—The extent of Chinese belief in evil spirits is only commensurate with the depth of their spiritual ignorance. This credulity stands patent to view in every street and alley. Here, for instance, is erected a stone block with the words, "Mount T'ai stone dares to ward off." This Mount T'ai, or Mount Great, is in Shantung, and its guardian deity is supposed to have power over the demons wandering in the air. When any of these "powers of the air" come across a T'ai-shan stone, they immediately turn aside awe-struck; hence, by a series of such stones, they may be conducted quite out of a village or town.

The ancient Pa-kwa, mentioned in the preceding chapter, the divining octagon of sixty-four whole and divided strokes, is also frequently seen, and as in its mazes poor demons are supposed to lose themselves easily, the very sight of it frightens them away. A few years ago, when our old hospital was built, a small street was widened to make the approach easier. Immediately, a military mandarin, the blank wall of whose yamen stands opposite, caused a Pa-kwa to be

erected on the top of that wall, in order to ward off any evil spirits that might wander down this lane.

Almost every house has its door charm to protect it from the aggressive demon. Either large sized figures of the gate gods are painted on the gates, or, at certain times of the year, swords made of the blade of a flag-plant are affixed, and always there is a fantastic character written on red paper and pasted on the door, to keep away the demons. Sometimes every door in the house has this red paper charm affixed, and even that more enlightened part of the Roman Catholic Church which is manned by Frenchmen has provided similar red paper Catholic charms for the doors of its people. The rooms have their charms, the bed has its charm, hosts of the people carry charms on their persons, and very few children are without them, either in the shape of an earring, a silver collar round the neck, or a silver deity in the cap.

Sometimes up country one sees the babies with a red imperial almanac stuck in their girdles, to warn off the demons which come prowling after their little lives. One village, a few years ago, after hearing a native Bible Colporteur extol his wares, almost cleared out his stock, and hung the Word of Life on its beds, in its rooms, and even on its babies, as a charm against the foes it so dreaded. Such is the state of FEAR in which the people live. They fear by day and they fear by night. With men they can be bold enough, but what are they to do with intangible demons in the darkness of the night?

A fortnight ago my daughter came home in much distress. She had seen a man lying senseless on the street in a pool of blood, and all alone. In vain had she urged her chairmen to stop to let her help the poor fellow, but they fled incontinently past with her. On inquiring what was the cause, I was informed that he had been struck down by a "sah," or murderous demon, which of course accounted for no one daring to approach him, lest the demon should find further exercise for its bloodthirsty proclivities. As a matter of fact the poor man had probably ruptured an artery and was helplessly bleeding to death. It is this same fear, rather than callousness, that sometimes hinders a native from

saving the drowning or others who are in danger, for the disappointed demon may wreak his vengeance on the would-be saviour.

The demons take many and varied forms. There is the demon that comes in shape of a fox, another that comes as a monkey, another as a white cock, still others as a dog, a cat, a fish, a snake. These demons take possession of the individual, and in some cases are said to change his nature into that of a fox, a monkey, a cock, as the case may be. Moreover, the possession is "catching," hence the neighbours dread it, for the demon may pass from house to house, or rather the demons are supposed to follow each other and collect in companies, when their name verily becomes legion.

Last Monday, at one of our circuit meetings, a local preacher was called upon to account for apparent neglect of an appointment. His reply, supported by the leader of the church in question was, that in this particular village they were having a three days' propitiation of the "Monkey," and no one was allowed on any account whatever to enter or leave the village, every avenue of which was carefully guarded, so that on the preacher presenting himself he was promptly turned away.

I remember also an old man, at a village on the hill tops, once whispering to me in awe-struck tones, "It comes over the pass there! I have heard it come bark, bark, barking at night, and I always knew that trouble would soon follow."

With its arrival, whether it be fox, or monkey, or cock, or what, sorrow also comes to the household. The family pig, which was being fed to pay the "rint," or for the New Year's festivities, must be killed and offered to the demon, or to some idol to induce its powerful influence with the disturber. The Taoist priests, lay or cleric,—there are both kinds,—are called in, for they know best what temples must be visited and what offerings made. When the family pig does not satisfy, another must be brought and killed, and another and another, until often the poor man's bit of land is mortgaged, his house sold and his clothes pawned to satisfy this awful creature that has honoured him with its hateful presence. And when at last it does take itself off, may be

it takes with it also the soul of the afflicted individual. Many are the families who are annually stripped of all their other possessions by this one unwelcome possession. Friends and neighbours avoid them, lest they too carry away a demon to their homes, just also as no one dare take in a person who has been burnt out by fire till three days have passed, lest the fire demon follow the doomed person.

It is here, however, that our Christians are strong and fearless. Christ has taken away their terror, and they are willing to go and pray and spend the night with the possessed, even sleeping in the same room, and more daring still, in the same bed. For what is a disturbed night if the devil can be robbed of his prey and driven from the soul he is tormenting! Moreover their faith prevails mightily. Many of the possessed recover immediately, and when once the whole family has been induced to clear out its family gods, and kneel with the Christians in prayer, it is rare for the possessed person not to recover. Some of the most violent most readily yield, but when there is resistance, the Christians have at times recourse even to fasting as well as prayer.

Another form of superstition is that a demon may obtain possession of the rational soul of a person, and carry it off to its lair. The sufferer lies in bed, feverish and delirious. He has been dosed in vain. What can be the matter? "This is a disease in which you must not economise. You must spend," say the friends, relatives, and neighbours, especially the neighbours, and by spend they mean call in the specialists, the Taoist priest, or the spiritualistic medium.

It is a case of a Lost Soul. Where can it be? The gods must be inquired of. How can this be done? A dream might be helpful; the god of dreams, if he could be aroused, would probably grant both a dream and its interpretation; but for that one cannot wait. A sacrifice before the gods, to be followed by a divination in their presence with the aid of bamboo tallies, or of the planchette for spirit-writing in the smoothed-out sand,—yes, try that, or better still find a medium. There is so-and-so, let us go there. They go with the medium before some god, the medium pretends to go off into a trance, giving utterance to weird-sounds,

supposed to be the words of the god, which his interpreter interprets. Or, take the case of a female medium, my next-door neighbour. She sits near her shrine, and simulates possession by two goddesses at one and the same time, who hold a sing-song consultation through her lips, the one in a contralto, the other in a falsetto voice. Falsetto, yes, falsetissimo! The whole system is false, false from base to summit. If ever a nation on earth unconsciously wailed aloud for the truthful Christ, and stretched out yearning hands towards Him, that nation is China.

Where, then, is the "lost soul" to be found? "It is here now," the medium says, "the god, or goddess, had found it and brought it back." Or, it is somewhere else, say in the Cave of the Rosy Mist, at the Taoist Temple outside the south gate. Send two women of the family, let them take the sick man's jacket, make offerings before the gods there, and call for the spirit at the mouth of the cave. They go; the rift in the rocks behind the temple is reached, though one may look long and in vain, through the guttering candles and smoking incense, for the "rosy mist" from which the place takes its charming name. Loudly and earnestly they cry the man's name, "Ah Ming! Ah Ming! Come home, come home!" His coat is opened wide and spread before the riven rock. Soon it is quickly folded up, wrapped under the outer garment of one of the women, an umbrella is expanded, rain or fine, and now begins the homeward journey. "Walk well," says the companion. "Ow" (All right), replies the one with the soul. "Here cross bridge." "Ow." "Walk well!" "Ow." "Turn this corner!" "Ow." Thus they keep up a talk the whole way, to comfort the soul in the jacket, until the room of the sick man is reached. The coat is now produced, thrown hastily over the patient, the curtains fall around the bed, the doors are closed, the soul returns to its body again,—or perhaps does not, when some other superstition must be obeyed. "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you FREE."

One of the most impressive sights I ever saw in my life was the escorting from Wenchow city three years ago of the cholera demons. It was estimated that twenty thousand people had died in the county from this terrible epidemic, and

ONE OF THE CYCLE GODS

at last,—when the epidemic was already dying,—a date was fixed for escorting away with great éclat the unwelcome visitors. For many nights beforehand, processions wended their noisy, lantern-lit way, through every street of the city and its suburbs, as well as along the great city wall. Torches flared and lanterns twinkled everywhere, the city being lit up as if for a fête. The demons were fed and appeased in every lane, while their boat was in course of preparation. The boat itself was made, not of stout timbers, but, for the most part, of paper ; demons, however, are such fools that they cannot tell the difference between a seaworthy and a leaky paste-and-paper article. Day by day, the temple where the boat was lodged, was thronged by a host of worshippers, who filled the boat with their silver offerings,—mock silver, of course, for the Chinaman is thrifty and demons are easily gulled. Such a tempting supply ! Such an abundance ! How could any decent devil refuse them ? The great night came, and here is what I saw, an account of which I published at the time :—

" All the influential deities of the neighbourhood were assembled in great style, at the temple of the God of the Eastern Peak,[1] and after the reciting of many prayers, if such be not a prostituting of the word, and the blazing away of countless crackers, the whole pantheon set off late at night to escort the visiting demons and their boat to the river.

" It was a weird scene. The accompanying crowd of human escorts numbered between five and ten thousand, each man—they were all men, and nearly all of them young men—carrying either a lantern at the end of a long strip of bamboo, or a blazing torch. We have seen processions before, but never so elaborate as on this occasion. Instead of travelling at the usual slow processional pace, the whole mass ran as fast as our narrow streets permitted, every man shouting at the top of his voice. Anyone who has had to face, or flee from a howling crowd of this kind, knows the thrill it inspires. On reaching the river bank the paper junk was speedily launched, a boatman with more pluck

[1] The Guardian of Hades, strictly speaking a State and not a Taoist divinity.

or less love of life than his fellows being in readiness to tow it down the river, where the spirits were soon sent somewhere else enwrapped in flames. Immediately the escort had passed out of the city the gate was closed, and no sooner was the paper junk launched than all lamps were hastily extinguished and everybody sneaked quickly and quietly home into the city by another gate, so that the spirits might lose their bearings, and not be able to find the way back again. How clever the Chinese are! And what fools the spirits! The Chinese very evidently think themselves cleverer than either the gods or the devils whom they worship, which makes one wonder why they worship them.

"In this particular district it is the custom to tell the demons that Wenchow is a very poor place, but that there is a city called Yangchow where the people are rich, the houses fine, the women beautiful, and everything much superior to what it is here. At the city of Ch'u Chow, up the Wenchow river, the demons on occasions like the present are always told that Wenchow is a better place than Ch'u Chow. Thus the people pass on the demons one to another. All which seems somewhat to differ from the teaching of 'the Master,' 'What you do not want yourself, do not pass on to others!'"

The Taoist priest, chiefly the lay priest, has a wide sphere of usefulness in checking petty theft. Have you had your cabbages or potatoes dug up? Then curse the thief, curse him loudly and in the open, strain your throat to breaking-point, curse him in his bed and at his board, curse him on the road and on the water, curse him in every feature and detail of his daily life, curse his parents and grandparents, curse his children and grandchildren, curse, curse, curse, chant away, in your most strident tones, till you are hoarse, and sore, and weary. What is his life and welfare, and that of his ancestry before and posterity after him in comparison with your hatful of potatoes, or armful of cabbage? Does he dare to come again, then hire the priest to curse him. Erect a three-sided scaffold, let the priest climb up the ladder-like steps you have strapped on with straw rope, and let him solemnly say his incantation, and chant his curses, till the man shall either miserably perish, or cease taking your twopenny worth of greens.

Or, instead of the priest, buy a picture of a human body; it is cheaper. Seek also a few old nails. Post the picture up at your door, and daily stand before it, and say your daily prayer by driving a daily nail, to-day into his left eye, to-morrow into his right, next day into his liver, then into his lungs, then into his—well, into his everywhere, and accompany each nail with a deadly curse. What is his life to your half-dollar pair of shoes? Perhaps your earnestness may even induce him to throw them back to you over the wall at night.

Taoism sells both its curses and its blessings cheaply. A few cash will procure a flag to put into your fields, ensuring protection from insect ravages and bad weather, and making certain a good crop. True the flag does not always answer, but the cost is small, and one may as well be on the safe side! Are you going a journey, or entering into a business transaction? Vow some candles, or undertake to walk in the god's next procession in chains, with dishevelled hair, and with the word "criminal" writ large on your back, and all will be well. Has your wife failed to present you with the desire of your life, a son to provide for your old age, and to serve your manes after death? Let her vow a baby's bib and tucker to one goddess, a pair of shoes to another, a testimonial plaque to another, and see if she does not soon present you with twins! Last Sunday I was told of a youth who was born (her first son) when his mother was forty-nine years of age. And my fair informant assured me that he had been "ngae djao djao li-ge," simply importuned into existence, the gods having been compelled to yield to the mother's prayers.

In brief, then, Taoism has two schools within it, the esoteric or philosophical, and the ignoble and superstitious. Its "priests" are of two orders, cleric and lay. The cleric is celibate, though the "Pope" himself is said to be plentifully married; as to the lay priest he takes a wife or not at will. The cleric wears the top-knot worn for thousands of years by the Chinese, until the present dynasty compulsorily introduced the pigtail. The lay priest dresses like an ordinary citizen, queue and all. The cleric lives on the temple endowments, and on services rendered to the living and the dead.

The laymen gets what he can by chanting and cursing, and, by the help of the devil, manages to make a living wage.

Time, paper, and patience utterly fail to describe the degradation into which the lower forms of Tao have fallen, but the nobler part of it still stretches up groping hands towards the silent heavens, and seeks to know, though in its own blind way, " the secret of God."

XVIII

THE FOREIGN RELIGIONS: BUDDHA, MAHOMET

"Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

BUDDHA, "the Light of Asia!" What a fascinating subject! What an alluring history! Though surrounded by extravagant legend, and wearing a garb of fantastic grotesqueness puerile to the Western mind, yet let fact but be winnowed from myth, and the story of Guatama, of his disciples, and of the conversion of the Orient cannot fail to enchain the attention of the thoughtful.

Let us try to picture him,—Shakyamuni Guatama, son of a small, though royal house, surrounded by the luxury of his age, a member of the noblest caste, a Brahman of the Brahmins, and a worshipper at many shrines. It is 2500 years since, but already Brahminism has put the Creator far away, and worships a host of inferior deities. Already "caste" has destroyed fraternity, and built impassable barriers between man and man. The weary people groan under a burden of religious exigencies which confer no comfort, and bestow no hope. Disease, suffering, death are man's heritage, and after death—what? A ceaseless round of births and re-births, of incarnations as man or beast, of reappearances as a worm to be trodden under foot, as grass for the oven, or as an ear of corn for the belly of man or beast. What hope is there for man? Even suicide only leads to greater woe. Weariness, now and hereafter, hopelessness everywhere, no pitying eye above, no hope of deliverance beneath, who shall deliver us, from body and from soul, unto sleep that shall be profound, undisturbed, endless?

Such were the thoughts that came to Guatama, as they had come to many before him. Burdened with the weariness of mankind, and, according to the legend, meeting in succession with "a miserable decrepit old man, a young man writhing in the agonies of disease, a dead corpse, and —by way of contrast—a serene-looking hermit," Guatama fled from his home, and sought enlightenment in the society of other recluses, who, before him, had fled the depravity and hopelessness of the age. These also failed him, and finally leaving the haunts even of hermits, he sought the isolation of the mountains.

Here, pondering alone the problems that men still ponder, —Whence? How? Whither?—he found no hopeful answer, and fashioned his beliefless creed. Forsaking the gods of his fathers, ignoring even Brahma himself, throwing "caste" to the winds, he set forth to teach men the way of escape.

Pondering over the whence, how, and whither of creation, he found nothing new to add to the notions already existing. These ideas, which dimly foreshadowed the modern view of evolution, he accepted as he found them. Whence came the world and universe? From a previous universe. How came it? By a process, first of destruction, then of evolution. Whither goes it? To destruction, and re-creation, and so on forever without end. Whence comes man? From the animal. How? By the process, first of death, then of re-birth. Whither goes he? To death and endless re-incarnation, as worm, beast, bird or man. What then is the highest good, if there be any highest good at all? Nirvana, cessation of sensation, unconsciousness of all diversion, perhaps annihilation itself. How is this blissful state to be reached? By austere morality, rigid self-discipline, compassion to all living things, complete withdrawal from the world.

Such is the gospel of Buddha, a gospel without God, and whose only hope lies in the cessation of consciousness.

With his simple robe and his mendicant's bowl, he, the son of princes, begged the meagre fare his body demanded, meditating meanwhile, preaching to his disciples, and expounding to those who sought him his doctrine of the vanity of all things,

together with the way of escape, through self-discipline, from the unceasing round of living and dying. "All existence necessarily involves pain and suffering. All suffering is caused by lust, or craving, or desire, of three kinds—for sensual pleasure, for wealth, and for existence. Cessation of suffering is simultaneous with extinction of lust, craving and desire. Extinction of lust, craving and desire, and cessation of suffering are accomplished by perseverance in the eight-fold noble path, viz., right belief or views, right resolve, right speech, right work, right livelihood, right exercise or training, right mindfulness, right mental concentration."

Disciples followed him, and adopted the garb and bowl, the bowl which to this day may be seen in the streets of China, held by some silent mendicant monk, whose only appeal for aid is his bowl and his thrice-tapped bell. And here is the summary of a monk's duties, as expounded by Guatama when he felt his end approaching :—" Which then, O monks, are the truths (the seven jewels) it behoves you to spread abroad, out of pity for the world, for the good of gods and men ? They are, first, the four earnest reflections (on the impurities of the body, on the impermanence of the sensations, of the thoughts, of the conditions of existence) ; 2. the four right exertions (to prevent demerit from arising, get rid of it when arisen, produce merit, increase it) ; 3. the four paths to supernatural power (will, effort, thought, intense thought) ; 4. the five forces (faith, energy, recollection, self-concentration, reason) ; 5. the proper use of the five organs of sense ; 6. the seven 'limbs' of knowledge (recollection, investigation, energy, joy, serenity, concentration of mind, equanimity) ; 7. the noble eightfold path."

A very different programme from the programme of Christianity, but the times were ripe for reformation, and even this unattractive attempt met with success. Self-discipline and compassion have always appealed to the Orient, perhaps because they are so very much needed. The brotherhood of man was attractive to some of high and many of low caste. The hope of avoiding lower forms of transmigration and being reborn as a man, perhaps as a Buddha (a seer), was in itself a heaven in comparison with the hell which all expected to pass

through after death. There was after all much to attract in Buddha's gospel; certainly it surpassed the Brahminism of his day, and his following had natural increase.

Nevertheless Shakyamuni died long before his philosophy met with wide acceptance. As to his Society, the rule that all its members must leave the world and subsist by the mendicant's bowl, in the very nature of things soon required modification, for despite men's efforts both in ancient and modern times, a church must consist of something more than its clergy. In Buddhism, however, the only hope of Nirvana still lay enfolded in the monk's robe.

Differing widely from the teaching of our Blessed Lord, at first no woman shared the privileges of Buddha's ministry. Of lower grade than man, her "highest aspiration should be to be reborn as a man." The Buddha, however, yielded to his disciple Ananda's wishes and later admitted woman to an inferior share in his religion, but the real Buddhist elevation of woman dates from a much later period. Not until the doctrine of the Madonna, the Compassionate Mother, had penetrated to the East, was the Goddess of Mercy changed from male to female form, and she to-day is the most common object of worship among the Buddhists of China.

For two centuries after the death of Gautama his religion was confined to the countries bordering on the Ganges. Then came the invasion of India by Alexander the Great, and "out of the political anarchy into which the whole conglomeration of Indian kingdoms was thrown, arose an Empire which soon swallowed up all the others." "It was founded by an adventurer of low birth, called Tchandragupta by the Buddhists, and Sandrakottos by the Greek historians. Despised on account of his low birth by Brahmins, he hated them in return and began to patronise the rising Buddhist Church."

His grandson Ashoka, who "united nearly the whole of India under his sceptre, became the Constantine of Indian Buddhism." Not content with being a mere passive adherent he established "a board for foreign Missions, which sent forth to all surrounding countries enthusiastic preachers, who went out, in self-chosen poverty, clad in rags, with the almsbowl in their hands, but supported by the whole weight of Ashoka's

political and diplomatic influence. His own son, Mahandra, went out as a missionary to Ceylon, and the whole island forthwith embraced the faith of Buddha."

"At the same time Cabulistan, Gandhara, Cashmere and Nepaul were brought under the influence of Buddhism, and thenceforth every caravan of traders that left India for Central Asia, was accompanied by Buddhist missionaries.

"In this way it happened, that as early as 250 B.C. a number of eighteen Buddhist emissaries reached China, where they are held in remembrance to the present day, their images occupying a conspicuous place in every large temple."

After the death of Ashoka, his empire fell to pieces, whereupon a terrible persecution broke out, in which most of the missionaries and pagodas were destroyed, and the death-blow given to Buddhism in India. "But this very persecution gave a renewed impetus to the foreign Missions of the Buddhists, who now pushed their way through the whole of Central Asia, and gained a lasting foothold among the Tartar tribes, which were just then in great commotion." One branch of the Tartars invaded and conquered the major part of India, and their greatest king, Kanishka, a contemporary of Christ, patronised Buddhism as liberally as Ashoka had done.

Buddhism, however, never regained its hold in India, where to-day it scarcely has existence, and that only in mutilated form. It lost a smaller empire, to gain a greater ; for, in due course, it took possession of China, Japan, Mongolia, Manchuria, Burmah, Ceylon, Annam and Siam. It has tamed savage tribes, tempered the cruelty of the semi-civilised, and prepared the way for an enlightenment of greater clarity and power.

The eighteen missionaries, who first reached the borders of China, produced at the time little if any impression on the country. Intercourse, peaceful and warlike, was, however, perpetually maintained between the two countries, for the stupendous heights and vast abysses of the Himalayas, as well as the Arid deserts of Central Asia have ever failed to act as impassable barriers. In B.C. 121, a golden statue of Buddha formed part of the spoils taken in campaign by the Chinese,

giving evidence that already the atheism of Buddha had ceased to satisfy, and that his followers, failing a higher object of worship, had enthroned the founder of their religion in the vacant seat of God.

In B.C. 2, the Emperor of China is said to have been presented with a number of the sacred books of Buddhism ; but not until A.D. 61 did its roots first strike in this Chinese soil. In that year, the Emperor Ming-ti " saw in a vision of the night, an image of gigantic dimensions, resplendent as gold, its head surrounded by a halo as bright as the sun, approach his palace, and enter it." In response to its call, he sent off ambassadors to the West, to learn all they could of this strange religion. They returned in A.D. 75, bringing along with them an Indian priest, a sandalwood statue of Buddha, and one sacred book. The priest, the image, the sutra, these three planted Buddhism in China, and, under imperial cultivation, it flourished apace.

But that which flourished was no longer the Buddhism of Buddha. Every imported religion gains and loses by its new environment. Each nation converted to Christianity, for instance, has had its reflex action on its converter. Christianity varies in every country in Europe, and amongst every race in that country. As wine poured into a goblet takes the shape of the vessel, so a religion partakes of the character of the nationality it converts. Thus is it likely to be with Christianity in China ; the national character of the Chinese will in a measure affect the form of the Christianity it receives —may it be forbidden to affect the substance ! So, just as in southern and eastern Europe, the very wine has become sadly mingled with the previous contents of the goblet, in China also, the Buddhism of to-day bears but faint resemblance to the teachings of its founder.

Already several centuries had passed from its inception to its recognition by the Chinese Emperor Ming-ti, and, during that period, persecution and local superstition working upon a faulty creed, had brought it into a fit state for further decadence. Certainly it introduced to China a dogma in regard to the future life more definite than any that Confucianism or Taoism had presented, yet, by the time the religion reached here, it was itself so plastic, and the Chinese so impressive—

THE BUDDHIST TRINITY

" a sea that salts all that flows into it "—that the transmigration from India to China was soon followed by its own metempsychosis also. To-day, the Buddhist monk is typical of his religion, a Buddhist surplice without, and a Chinese body and soul within.

Almost all that Chinese Buddhism now retains of its Founder's teaching is his life of " contemplation "—which it transforms into a life of apathetic listlessness—and its pity for animals, which it turns into a grotesque feeding of sacred pigs or sacred fish, or the occasional setting free of a basket of snakes, which had better far be killed and eaten by the beggar who caught them than sold to the devout.

Buddhism now is no longer a godless religion, as was sufficiently shown in Chapter XV.; for, while the philosophical Buddhist will give you philosophical names for the three colossal images found in every temple, " the common people understand little or nothing of such speculations. They see before them three separate deities, they speak of and worship, not a triune god, but a triad of idols, which they regard as three different divinities." Nor is their worship confined to these three. The eighteen earliest missionaries, or Lo-hans, also receive their share of worship, as do the four enormous figures that guard the entrance of the temple, to say nothing of the Goddess of Mercy, the laughing Buddha, and a host of others.

The temple is redolent of smouldering incense, the sacred lamp burns night and day, and the somnolent quiet of the place is disturbed,—when disturbed at all,—by nothing save the myriad repeated drone of " Namo Omitofu,"—" Praised be Amita Buddha." For verily, in much speaking and vain repetitions does the religion of the present-day Buddhist consist. The devotee is urged to the monotonous repetition of this phrase, and thousands and tens of thousands of times a day does it pass the lips of the devout, the beads telling their rapid tale of merit laid up and favour gained. Thus has Shakyamuni, who taught no Divine worship, become the chief god of the religion he founded.

Again, the doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, has ceased to be an effective doctrine of the Buddhist

cult. In its place, and probably under the influence of Christianity, the two states of heaven and hell are taught. To attain to the one and escape the other, the devotee chants his, more often her, oft-recited invocation, offers incense and candles before the images, abstains from flesh meat for a period of months or even years, and makes a pilgrimage to some distant temple, if possible even to the sacred Isle of Pootoo, the " Universal Ferry."

Four years ago, an old lady, yielding to the more satisfying call of Jesus Christ, and forsaking her idols, put her trust in the living and loving Father. She had been a follower of Buddha for tens of years, and, at much risk and expense, had even made the pilgrimage in a Chinese junk, from Wenchow to Pootoo. There she had obtained from the abbot the most precious thing her hands had ever held, a passport to the Paradise of the West, the Buddhist Heaven. It was in duplicate, one to be burnt at her graveside, the other to be enclosed in her coffin. Granted by Kwan-yin, the Goddess of Mercy, and signed by the abbot, what greater assurance of future happiness could an old woman possess! How she brought herself to give it up she alone knows, but the time came when she could no longer keep this costly passport in the house. Should she burn it ? She would have done so, but her nephew, Mr " Summer," suggested that the missionary's wife would like to see this thing, in which she had so long put her trust. Gladly she sent it down from her mountain home to the city, and not a few are the interested eyes in far-away England that have since looked upon this passport to heaven.

Here then another great doctrine, the one that lay at the very foundation of Buddhism, has been given up. The one object of Shakyamuni's life and teaching was by morality and self-discipline to attain to unconsciousness. The one object of the modern Buddhist,—when he has any beyond the claims of the present,—is to attain to a conscious and eternal happiness.

As to self-discipline, and the code of morals by which Buddha and his immediate followers hoped to attain Nirvana, while there is every reason to believe that they have played a valuable part in Chinese life, and that they do still in-

fluence numbers to a virtuous life, and to a striving after immortality, they do so in spite of those who stand as ensamples to the flock. The Buddhist monk is immoral, lazy, uneducated, and despised by the people upon whom he preys for his profitable prayers. And while the nuns are clean, bright-looking and externally attractive, they are noted for their lives of dishonour. A few years ago one of our pastors, then unconverted, on going to seek entry into a small monastery, was asked by the old monk why he came. "I want to learn to be good," he replied. "But where do you find a good monk?" asked the old man. "If you really want to be good, go and become a Christian, that's the best religion." Our enemies being judges!

As to prayer, Buddha had no place for it in his system. For that matter true prayer is scarcely known amongst his soi-disant followers to this day, but chanting and invocation are incessant. The people hereabouts have not yet resorted to merely mechanical means, save those of the lips for repetition and the finger and thumb for telling the beads. In the north, however, both men and women save time and labour by carrying a praying wheel, shaped liked a drum with a pivot through the middle. Inside the drum is an invocation, and unwearyingly it is twirled and twirled, each turn counting as a call on Buddha. Similar drums of huge size stand by the roadside for the passers-by to turn. In this manner does the modern Buddhist relieve his dread of the future.

The monasteries are often buildings of large size, those in and around Peking being very fine structures and crowded with monks. Frequently these monasteries are erected at a distance from busy centres, and amidst lovely surroundings.

Visiting some distant stations a few months ago I passed through superb mountain scenery, and took the opportunity of calling at several monasteries. Fifteen years ago I spent the night at one of them, situated beneath a magnificent overhanging rock. It was then in excellent preservation, now it is dilapidated and almost empty, for a new one has recently been built six miles south of the Wenchow city, at the foot of a mountain, and this has drawn some of the monks away from other retreats. It has, moreover, recently be-

come influential enough to obtain from the north a valuable copy of the Buddhist classics. The copy arrived on board our local steamer, accompanied by a number of monks, whereupon all the local mandarins, and all the monks in the district, went out in full dress to pay honour to the classic, and to escort it to its destination.

Thus does the disdainful Confucian officer bow at the shrine of Buddha, just as readily as he does at any and every other shrine. He will recite a Buddhist chant "as a sure cure for stomach ache," and call in the Buddhist priests to release his father's soul from Hades, all the while in his heart despising the man, and sneering at his methods.

The monasteries are kept up by endowments, by the mendicant's bowl, by gifts of the worshippers, who are by no means numerous, save on special occasions, and particularly by prayers for the dead. Both Buddhist and Taoist monks claim to have power to open the gates of hell and release the tormented soul, and what would not a wife or a son pay, to have a husband or father brought out of the dreadful hell that is so realistically pictured for them in the temples ?

A few days ago a couple of inoffensive converts came to ask my aid in getting them back home in safety. Members of their branch of the clan had resolved to hold a Buddhist service to release the souls of their ancestors from purgatory, where they had been undergoing misery for tens of years. In consequence each family was mulcted in a given sum. Our two converts, who could not conscientiously pay this money, were immediately attacked and beaten, and had to run away for safety. They were very patient, sought no reprisals, nothing but to be allowed o return home in peace. One's sympathies go with both parties, with the converts in their sufferings, and with the pagans in their ignorance. What incredible selfishness on the part of the Christian to know that their forefathers were enduring the horrors of purgatory, and yet refuse to give a small sum for their release ! Where is the boasted charity of Christianity ! Where the love of fellowmen ! Such inconsistency is incomprehensible !

Buddhism has been persecuted, its temples destroyed, its

books burnt, thousands of its monks and nuns have been at various times compelled, the men to return to a lay life, the nuns to marry. Theoretically proscribed, it still remains an influential factor in Chinese life. Its power, however, is decadent, and, unless the Japanese bring about its temporary rehabilitation, which is not greatly to be feared, Christian Missions have nothing to dread from its influence. So little are the monks and nuns attached to its tenets that were Christianity to offer them a modest income and nothing to do,—especially the latter,—it is doubtful if many would find conscientious scruples enough to hesitate about deciding. Many have stated to me, as their sole reason for not becoming Christians, that they have no other living to which to turn; and a few years ago, one of them, looking around his idols, said to me with a sigh, "Christianity is true, and these are false, but I have no property and must stay here and cheat for a living."

MOHAMMEDISM was introduced to China, according to Mussulman records, by the direction of Mohammed himself, he having in A.D. 628 sent his uncle by sea as an envoy to the Emperor of China. Mr E. H. Parker in his recent book advances another account from Chinese sources, placing its introduction twenty-three years later, after the death of Mohammed. It is safe to say that the religion was brought here in the seventh century, and that by imperial sanctions mosques were built and the free exercise of the religion granted. Later, tens of thousands of Mohammedans settled in the province of Shensi, near the capital. In 756, 4000 Arab soldiers were sent to the aid of the Chinese Emperor against a Turkish rebel. These men married and settled in China, and large numbers of Turks came to Chinese ports and had consuls of their own. In 850, 120,000 Mohammedans, Jews and Christians perished during a rebellion in Canton. Still more of them arrived during the succeeding dynasty and settled on the coast. This dynasty (the Mongol) annexed the western province of Yunnan, in which the Bible Christian Mission has now a successful work. The inhabitants being wild and uncivilised, "the Mongol Emperor appointed Omar, a Mohammedan from Bokhara, to be the governor. He invited a large number of

scholars and co-religionists to come and help him to civilise and convert the people, which they did, till almost the whole province became Mohammedan." Those of the north-west provinces of Shensi and Kansuh also increased in numbers and became powerful.

Little is heard of them during the succeeding Ming dynasty, from which we may infer that they caused no political trouble, but the present Manchu dynasty has found in them a frequent cause of unrest, and during the nineteenth century has in the north-west pursued a policy of repression. "From 1817 to 1855, the Chinese mandarins, by a series of oppressions and wholesale massacres of men, women and children in Yunnan, roused the whole province to rebellion, which in 1863 they put down by a crowning act of treachery, beheading seventeen Mohammedan chiefs, whom they had invited to a friendly council and banquet." Another rising, into which the Mohammedans were subsequently goaded, occurred in the north-west, which took twelve years to suppress, which suppression was brought about by the slaughter and annihilation of great multitudes of the prophet's followers.

Nevertheless there are still enough of them left in China to form a good-sized European nation. Twenty millions of them still hold their own, between eighteen and nineteen millions of whom dwell in the west and north-west. There are a hundred thousand in Peking itself, while this province of Chekiang has only a few small colonies, in all but a few thousand souls. Here in Wenchow their total community is only three or four hundred. They have a small mosque, but, having no efficient superintendence, are lax in their religious observances. A few years ago, a mollah was sent down from Shanghai as a deputation. He called on me and expressed himself in very friendly terms towards Christianity. When scattered abroad amongst the ordinary people, while still clannish and separate, they are nevertheless orderly and peaceful, and, giving no trouble to the administration and worshipping their ancestors like all decent Chinese, they are allowed freedom of religious observance without let or hindrance.

The Mohammedans here, as in the west, avoid that eminently Chinese animal, the pig, and therefore pork is never seen on their tables. We in this port owe to them whatever

beef—diligently toughened by many years of ploughing—we are able to obtain, for, being deprived of pork they supply its place with beef, as they have not the same objection to the slaughter of the virtuous ox as the Buddhist and Taoist societies profess.

XIX

THE FOREIGN RELIGIONS: CHRISTIANITY

"And He shall reign for ever and ever: King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

CHRISTIANITY has had a much greater influence on China than its followers generally recognise, for the progress of Christianity cannot be estimated by counting the heads of its tabulated converts. It has a double influence, individual and collective, conscious and unconscious, intensive and diffusive. Our Lord's parable of the lamp indicates the diffusive influence of His teaching, and of the exhibition of that teaching in the lives of His disciples. We count the heads of the "elect" to form an idea of the illuminating force at work; these are the "candle power" of the church. They are elect, not for themselves but for others, just as a lamp is not lit for itself, but to diffuse light. So Christianity has had an influence not only in selecting individuals amongst every tribe and nation, whose names we inscribe on our registers, but on a much wider scale it has been illuminating both nations and creeds that unconsciously received it.

Protestants, also, are apt to date the introduction of Christianity into China from the year 1806, forgetting that Roman Missions existed here before the separation of the Church into Catholic and Protestant. Romanists in their turn are slow to remember that neither was it they who introduced Christianity to China, for the Nestorian branch of the Church had a numerous following in the seventh century, and were still powerful when John of Monte Corvino arrived five centuries later.

But there is very considerable probability that Christianity

had been an unrecognised power in the land for centuries before the advent of the followers of the Syrian Nestorius. It is known to have reached India very early in its history, indeed there is no sufficient reason to discredit the tradition that St Thomas himself was the apostle to the Hindus. Buddhism was then still somewhat of a power in that land of its origin and, as has been shown, was being sought by the Chinese Emperor. About that period a great and revolutionary change took place in the Buddhist Church, which until then had only existed in the form since known as the Hinayana school, but another school was at that time introduced which is known as the Mahayana, and it is this form of Buddhism which was implanted in China. These terms mean respectively Lesser Vehicle, and Greater Vehicle, the Hinayana conveying the few over this terrestrial sea of sorrow to Nirvana, while the Mahayana is supposed to convey the many, not to annihilation, but to Paradise.

Now whence came this remarkable importation, this veritable revolution into Buddhism? Dr Timothy Richard, who has made special inquiry on the subject assures us that, in consequence of this great revolution, "Chinese and Japanese Buddhism after all is not Buddhism proper but imbedded Christianity." He further tells us that "the introduction of Christianity to China happened thus. In the first century after the Christian era Ashvagosha introduced a new school of thought into Buddhism, called the Mahayana school. According to Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, the former school of Buddhism—the Hinayana school—was on the wane. When the Mahayana was introduced it flourished everywhere throughout China and Japan. Now some of the chief peculiarities of the Mahayana school are the following:—Belief in a God who saves. Belief in faith in this God as surpassing all good works. Belief in Paradise at once without rounds of transmigration. Belief in the necessity of effort to save others.

"The Chinese Buddhist books refer to this school as the 'different' religion. Those who know original Buddhism will notice how different these doctrines are from those of original Buddhism." "The Buddhist books themselves say that they got these ideas from Western India." "The conclusion of the whole matter is that these Messianic ideas

were transmitted to India and through Buddhism into China and Japan, where they have been the chief forces in later Buddhism, till overlaid again with the deadly weight of early Hinayana doctrine. So out of the hundred millions of Buddhists in the world the majority are not Buddhists at all, but are holding Christianity in Buddhist garb and nomenclature."

In Tibet, which is a stronghold of Buddhism, the revolutionary party, led by Tsongkhaba about A.D. 1450, adopted the Mahayana teaching, and moreover "adopted the whole organisation of the Roman Catholic Church," which organisation survives to the present day. Hence "the Buddhist Church of Tibet has its popes, cardinals, prelates, bishops, abbots, priests, and nuns," with "their infant baptism, their confirmation, their ordination and investiture, their mass for the dead, litanies, chants and antiphons, rosaries, chaplets, candles and holy water, processions and pilgrimages, saints' days and fast days and so forth."

As to the influence of Christianity on TAOISM, it has already been shown that a new and higher school of thought was introduced into that cult in the eighth century, by a philosopher of the name of Lü Tung P'in. He had been brought up in the midst of the Nestorian Christians; and we have seen how he revolutionised for many the Taoist religion by lifting the search for immortality out of the region of matter into the realm of the soul.

Of the effect of Christianity on Mohammedanism there is little need to write. Carlyle says "Islam is definable as a confused form of Christianity." Confused it certainly is, and with much that is harmful in it, but what would it have been without its Old and New Testament element? If all that is is right, then it is well that Mohammed met the Nestorian priest, who, though imperfectly, taught him what he learnt of Christ. At any rate, all that our immediate argument demands is the recognition that the best doctrines of Mohammedanism are of Christian origin.

Thus, then, we may fairly maintain that the teachings of the Christian religion have had a more or less revolutionising influence on the religions of the Orient, and it is reasonable to expect that thereby the way has been in some measure

prepared for the glories that are yet to be revealed to them. For while it is true that sometimes half a truth is the greatest lie, those who believe that God is guiding the world out of darkness into light, must be grateful for Truth, even though it shine ever so dimly through a dull horn lantern of ignorance and even of barbarism. The cross is the highest emblem of Christ's teaching; therefore wherever we find voluntary suffering for the sake of God and men we find the highest truth.

But the success of the Gospel is by no means confined to influence upon the native cults — that is a by-product. It has what is much greater, a direct influence on individual life and character. So far as is known the first direct apostles to reach China were those early protestants against the excessive Mariolatry of the Romish Church, the Syrian Christians, commonly called Nestorians. Early in the sixth century delegates from that branch of the Church traversed the wilds of Central Asia, reached the Chinese capital, were received at court, and granted permission to practise and propagate their religion. For more than eight centuries they maintained a separate existence and prospered, but with the disappearance of the Mongol dynasty we lose sight of them. Whether they lost their early faith, as did so many of the Nestorian Churches in the Orient, and were absorbed into Buddhism, Mohammedanism, or Taoism is mere matter of surmise, but as a separate Church they disappear entirely from view.

The next missionaries to arrive were European priests, to whom Protestants have as clear a claim, if they care to make it, as have the present-day Romanists, for these missionaries came before the great separation. The Far East was not wholly ignorant of the doctrines they came to proclaim, for the Nestorians had already paved the way; but with the intolerance of that period, the later arrivals chose to treat their predecessors as heterodox, corrupt, and inimical, so that instead of sinking their differences for the salvation of the heathen, they presented themselves as rival parties for the suffrages of the Empire.

John of Monte Corvino was the first to arrive, in the year 1289. He had wandered across the vast distances of Central

Asia, in that period when Europe had just ceased to quake at the terrifying advance of the now satiated Tartar conquerors. Glutted with their spoils, and desirous of safeguarding their newly acquired territories, the Tartars, confronted with a new foe in the Saracens, were ready to make friends with Christians, recognising in them a common hatred against their new enemy. It was in this fortunate hour that John of Monte Corvino reached the Court of the Great Khan, was welcomed, and granted permission to disseminate his doctrines. Deserved success followed his devoted labours. Two churches were built by him in the capital, "where he performed service with all the pomp of the Catholic ceremonial. He trained a large number of Tartars to chant, and the emperor became fond of coming to hear them." In 1305 he writes, "I have not for twelve years received any intelligence either from the court of Rome, or from our own order, and I am entirely ignorant of the state of affairs in the West." In 1308 three other missionaries succeeded in reaching him, and in 1312 still three more were sent, all of whom lived on the bounty of the emperor. John of Monte Corvino died in 1328 when eighty years of age, having "converted more than thirty thousand infidels, during his long and laborious mission." His success, however, had been almost entirely amongst the Tartars, who were at that time the rulers of China. Not long after his death the Tartars were driven from power, and in the strife and slaughter which followed all the missionaries lost their lives, and the fires they had so courageously lighted were utterly extinguished.

The second period of Catholic propaganda in China dates from the period of the Reformation. In 1552 Francis Xavier sought the shores of this mighty empire. No longer was it necessary to traverse the barren and hostile lands of Central Asia, for Vasco de Gama had doubled the Cape, and Portuguese influence was asserting itself throughout the Far East. Hindered in his progress by the jealousy of the Portuguese Governor of Malacca, Xavier was never permitted to do more than gaze upon the shores that his feet longed to press, and from which he rendered up his soul to God.

Other unsuccessful attempts were made to enter these closed doors, and it was not until 1582 that Matteo Ricci, with indomitable courage and an adroitness that surpassed even that of the Chinese, succeeded in finally laying the foundation of his church, first in the province of Canton, then in Nanking, and later in the imperial capital. A typical Jesuit, he became all things to all men, and by his diplomatic address, and his skill in clock-making and astronomy, won his way into the favour of the emperor himself. With the fall of this, the Ming dynasty, in the following century, the Church was only preserved from being overwhelmed in the general *débâcle* by the ability of Adam Schaal, who through his astronomical knowledge and his skill in casting cannon, became a favourite with the emperor of the new, that is to say the present Ts'ing dynasty, as also did Verbiest in the following reign by similar manifestation of ability.

The Romish missionaries of the seventeenth century had a brilliant opportunity of winning over the whole Empire, but disputes soon arose amongst their various orders, first over the term for God, and also *inter alia* over the question of ancestral worship. The disputes were referred both to the Pope and to the Emperor, and when ultimately the Papal bull arrived, directly opposing the ruling of the Emperor K'ang-hsi, such was the offence it gave to that puissant monarch that hindrance, persecution and, in 1724, proscription followed. From then until the period following the Treaty of 1842, persecution mostly of a moderate nature resulted, but despite many hardships and even dangers, many priests, secretly visited the converts, and by this means kept alive the faith of their people. In consequence, when the Treaty of 1858, granting liberty of worship, was signed, the Catholics were able to claim a total community of over three hundred thousand people. Their returns for 1903-4 show 803,000 baptised converts, 306,700 unbaptised catechumens, with 42 bishops, 1062 foreign priests, and 493 ordained native priests. They have also many nuns at work, and are the owners of much valuable property.

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH did not enter upon the field until the year 1806, nor can it be seriously blamed for the long delay. The two centuries which succeeded that separation

from Rome which saved Christianity both to Rome and to the world, were occupied with much recasting of creeds, and much struggling for freedom from the shackles that the prisoners, though escaped, had not yet been able to shake off. Afterwards, *odium theologicum* had its natural result in a period of indifference, which it required a Wesley to end. To Wesley is due our modern Mission Work, and to-day the world has indeed become his parish, even though workers may call themselves by other names than his.

Robert Morrison arrived in Canton in 1806. As previously shown, his first endeavour, after learning the language and compiling a dictionary, was to translate the Holy Scriptures. Let it not be thought, however, that he was content to live the life of a recluse. Faithfully did he bear witness, as opportunity presented, to the truth whose propagation in China he had espoused.

In process of time others joined him from England and America. Tracts were printed, Testaments issued, and the interior of the land being denied them, earnest men seized every opportunity for carrying these books along the coast in trading vessels, and distributing them in the various towns called at, in the hope that the printed page might penetrate further than could their few weak voices.

The first decades of the century passed with little visible result. More missionaries died than converts were made. Man after man fell at his post, with nothing but divine hope to irradiate his dying bed, for of actual fruit he saw little. In 1842, after nearly forty years of labour, the total church consisted of six communicants. Nor can we wonder that men of degenerate spiritual character, ignorant or heedless of the amazing facts of history, should deride the folly of these missionary adventurers, who with no temporal advantages to offer, came to the most practical people in the world, bringing a mere theory as their sole stock-in-trade. It *is* incredible that so little should win so much, and herein, to the willing mind, is clearly revealed the wisdom of God and the power of God.

By degrees here one and there another was touched into newness of life by the magnetic finger of the truth, and five years before the Treaty of 1858, which opened the ports and

even the interior to the preaching of the gospel, the six communicants had increased to 350, and the number of missionaries to a hundred and twenty or thirty. By the year 1877, when the first great Conference met, the 350 had grown to 13,515 communicants, representing a community of treble that number of the population. A by no means despicable record this, considering the constant opposition, and often bitter persecution, that had barred the way of the infant Church!

From that day it has never looked back. Even the virulence of persecution has but added its weight to the sincerity of our converts, in leading all classes of society to enquire into this new and strange doctrine. When the second Conference met in 1890, thirteen years after the first, the number of communicants had increased to nearly 40,000 (actually 37,287).

The latest statistics show still more remarkable progress, and this notwithstanding the cruel sufferings of 1900, and the martyrdom of Protestant Christians, estimated at 30,000 during that awful year. They indicate that there are now in China nearly 150,000 communicants, figures that, encouraging though they are, by no means represent the full progress of the work. For, in addition to the communicants, must be reckoned adherents and the young, whereupon we find a body of at least half a million Protestant Christians in this country, all of them in regular attendance at the services. This is the fruit of one century's work, and that the first and therefore most difficult.

Nor is this all. Great numbers, who do not yet profess Christianity, are being daily enlightened in school and college, in hospital and dispensary, in village and city church, by evangelist and colporteur, by tract and scripture, by high class literature and able magazine, but, best of all, by the daily light shed through living lamps lit by the Lord's own illumination.

Altering slightly the words of Dr Eitel, " it took Buddhism three hundred years before it obtained official recognition, and many centuries more before the mass of the people were influenced by it " ; it took the powerful organisation of the Roman Church quite as long to reach its present figures.

" Who then will speak of the failure of Protestant Missions, which during the first century of their operations have gathered half a million converts into the Christian Church," despite open opposition and secret intrigue, despite pillage, riot, barbarity, murder and massacre, despite the worst foes a man can have, " those of his own household ? "

Towards these figures our own Mission in Wenchow has had the privilege, during the quarter of a century of its existence, of gathering in 2200 communicants, and 6000 probationers, giving a total with children of approaching 10,000 souls, a people upon whom, dwelling in darkness and the shadow of death, the light has shone, and through whom it throws a never ceasing radiance upon the darkness of the pagan life and the dreariness of the pagan tomb.

To sum up, then, the success of Christianity can not be measured by the number of its confessed converts. It has an influence reaching far beyond the dreams of the enthusiast. It permeates not only individual members of the race, but alters the very tenets of the native faiths. Mohammed gathered his best teachings from Christ ; modern Buddhism in its best form—the Mahayana school—is not Buddhism, but a phase, however blurred, of Christianity; Taoism, perhaps the most popular religion of China, has its Christianised school ; while Brahminism has undergone, and is still undergoing, revolutionary modification through the dominating influence of Christian light.

It may be that the Universality of Christian truth will come about as much by internal evolution in the various schools of the world as by the conversion of individual believers. It may be that all the best representatives of these schools will be called out therefrom and idolatry fall by a process of natural decay. It may be that there will yet come a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the temples of idols become with one mighty revolution Temples of God. Be the method what it may, the result must be the same, and Christ become the moral and spiritual Lord of humanity, for there has been none so worthy nor can the human mind imagine another to surpass Him, Son of God and Son of Man, Glory of God and Glory of Man.

Let it be our sufficient " call " that the Chinaman knows

not the " peace that passeth understanding," yet needs it; that he has not heard of, much less experienced, " joy in God," naught indeed save fear; that he has never heard of the " upward glancing of the eye," save in dread; that he has no immediate " hope of heaven," only a fearful expectation of at least a preliminary darkness and horror; that he has no comfort in sorrow or bereavement, no spirit of prayer or knowledge of its delight and power, no spiritual fellowship or helpful communion, and, indeed, none of that priceless inheritance which transforms religion from a galling bondage into a glad and glorious liberty, both in regard to the life that now is and that which is to come. Let this be our sufficient call; the command of our Master " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," our sufficient stimulus; and joy in bringing in His kingdom our sufficient reward.

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