

Photo: W. F. Taylor.

"THIS IS THE WAY WE EAT OUR FOOD"—IN CHINA.

# **“According to your faith.”**

**A Story of how the Gospel was taken  
to China.**

**By M. D. S.**

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*To my four girls,  
for whose pleasure, help and encouragement  
this book has been written.*

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# “According to your faith.”

## CHAPTER I.

“OTHER FELL ON GOOD GROUND.”

SOME few years ago, one cold November day, we moved into a new house not very far from London. The garden was a large one, and had been well stocked with trees and flowers, but it had a desolate and neglected appearance, with its unswept walks and lawns, untended borders and bare trees.

Before long, however, a gardener was engaged, and by the time the summer came it was a very different picture. As the months went by it was a constant source of interest and pleasure to see what was coming up in the flower beds, and when the fruit began to form on the trees we waited impatiently for it to ripen. How we enjoyed that first gathering of plums, apples, pears, mulberries and quince, and how grateful we felt to those who had planted the trees years before and had tended them carefully, so that we were able to enjoy the fruit !

Now something like that has been hap-

pening in China. We have been hearing recently of a little band of Christians in that heathen country, who have had the faith and courage to devote themselves wholly to the Lord, and to separate themselves from all who are not willing to follow Him in the simplicity of the early Bible days. What wonderful fruit for God, to see in that dark country a spot in which He can take delight, and those of us who love Him can surely take delight in it too.

We may perhaps wonder how in such a dark, heathen land such a thing can have come about, but just as we knew that some one had planted the trees in our garden, so we know that some one sowed the seed many years ago in China. The planting of the seed was difficult and has cost many lives, and at times it has seemed as though it would wither away and die, but now God has given the increase.

Many books have been written about China for grown-up people, but not so many for those who are younger, and it may be that some will find it interesting to hear about one who has done almost more than any other to take the Bible to China, and to sow the seed of which we have been speaking.

Over one hundred years ago in 1832, in the Yorkshire town of Barnsley, a baby boy was born in one of the old houses in the Market Place. His father was a chemist, James Taylor by name, with a growing busi-

ness in the town, and the home over the shop, which had been a happy one before, now seemed completed by the parents' joy in the baby son that God had given them.

It was no ordinary home to which that baby had come, though to look at the shop outside one might have thought it was very much like all the others. One thing, however, that made it differ from many of its neighbours was that those who lived in it—James Taylor and his wife Amelia—had early given their hearts to Jesus, and the whole aim of their lives was to serve Him and to make their home a place where God was honoured and obeyed. Their Christianity did not consist in going to a service once or twice on Sunday to worship God, and then pleasing themselves all the week. Their Bible, too, was not a book to be read as a sense of duty, but the living word of God; and they believed quite simply that they would find in it all that they needed to guide and help them in their everyday life.

So one day when the father read in Exodus that all the firstborn were to be sanctified and set apart for God—“Mine shall they be”—he and his wife took the words quite literally, and then and there knelt down in the fulness of their hearts and gave their child in faith to the service of the One who claimed him. To them it was not a question of how little they could give, but could they withhold anything from the One

whom they loved, and who had done so much for them? They felt that their gift was accepted, but little did they think how wonderfully God was going to use the child then given Him to serve His purposes in later years.

They named him James Hudson Taylor, after his father and his mother, who had been Amelia Hudson before her marriage. From the first he was a delicate little fellow, needing unusual love and care; but this very delicacy kept him in closer touch with his parents than might have been the case had he been a normal healthy boy.

It would have been very easy to spoil him and make his ill-health the ground for lack of discipline, but when they felt the difficulty of insisting on obedience or self-control, they turned in prayer to the heavenly Father into whose keeping they had given their son, and prayed for guidance to train him aright.

So well did they do their work that years after he wrote in a letter: "I have never known disobedience to the definite command of a parent, even if that parent were mistaken, that was not followed by retribution. . . . When a son or daughter can say in all sincerity, 'I am waiting for you, Lord, to open the door,' the matter is in His hands and He will take it up."

Before many years had gone past two more boys and two little girls were added to

the family, but only the girls, Amelia and Louisa, will appear in this story, as the boys both died in early childhood. Amelia was only a few years younger than Hudson, and a great deal of their time was spent together. It was a household in which all joys and pleasures were shared, and the children early learnt to find their interests and happiness in the home that centred round their sweet and gentle mother.

She it was who taught the little girls and gave them their daily lessons, while Hudson did his studies under his father's guidance, as he was too delicate to go to school. A busy life that mother led, as she was not able to employ more than one maid-of-all-work, and any morning she might be found down in the old-fashioned, stone-floored kitchen busy with the household cooking, while at the side table the two little girls worked at their sums and spelling under their mother's supervision.

To us, in these days, it may seem a strange way of “going to school,” but there, in the homely kitchen with its well-whitened floor and shining stove, and mother's rocking-chair standing by, waiting in case she should have a minute to sit down between her tasks, lessons were learned that are not always learned in the most up-to-date modern schools, and habits of industry and perseverance were acquired that stood them in good stead all their lives.



The chief interest of their home life centred round the comfortable sitting-room at the back of the shop. Here they worked or read in the afternoons while their mother was busy sewing, and here they were encouraged to study books of travel, natural history or standard works, with their mother, who was a keen reader, to help them over the difficult places, and a dictionary always at hand to hunt up hard words. Here they had their meals, and father would come in from the shop to join his children gathered round the table, and listen with interest to accounts of their doings and the happenings of the day, or perhaps to interest them in the conversation of some Christian neighbour who had called into the shop on business and had stayed for a chat. For James Taylor had become a well-known man in the surrounding district, one who could be relied upon for his straight and upright dealing, one who could be appealed to for advice in difficulty, and one who could always be counted on to give sympathy and help in sickness or distress.

Many was the time when he would fill up a bottle of medicine for one too poor to pay and give it back with a pleasant smile and kindly handclasp, telling him to come again when it was finished.

On market days friends from the country round would drop in and be invited into the sitting-room for a cup of tea and a chat,

and before long the talk usually came round to the things that matter most, and the children would sit and listen to accounts of God's work at home and abroad, till their hearts were stirred within them and little Hudson would long for the time when he too could go and tell others about Jesus.

## CHAPTER II.

### FOOTPRINTS IN THE SANDS OF TIME.

ONE of Hudson's earliest recollections was of his grandfather, John Taylor, who also lived in Barnsley, but died when Hudson was two and a half.

When not much more than a baby he used to be taken to chapel on Sunday morning, and after the, to him, long service and trying sitting-still time, what a pleasure it was to be lifted up by the sweet-faced old gentleman on to his knee and praised for sitting so still, and then home they would go hand in hand to the stone house in Pitt Street where his grandparents lived and kept open house on Sundays.

It is a fine thing to have had Christian ancestors, those who have gone before and marked out the way for us, and many were the stories handed down to little Hudson and his sisters. What could be more thrilling than to hear of how his great-grandfather, an earlier James Taylor, had been converted on his wedding morning in the most unexpected manner ?

That was in 1776, in the days of John Wesley's preaching. Young James Taylor

was a stone-mason and had a cottage at Staincross Ridge which was all ready to receive his bride, a young village girl named Betty Johnson. He was a bell-ringer in the village church, and very popular on account of his fine voice and gay spirits and love of dancing, and Betty was as gay as he was and had no love for Methodists or serious folk.

The morning came, a cold February day, and the young man rose up betimes to get all ready for his bride, for this was before the days of honeymoons, and the young couple would come home to their cottage and need everything in order. So there was water to be fetched and wood to be cut, and corn to be threshed and carried to the mill to be ground, and he must be well on his way to the house of his bride long before noon.

But something occurred that upset all his plans. As he was on his way to the barn to thresh his sheaves God met him in the way and spoke to him. That is the only explanation of what followed. Into his head came the words, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." He knew what it meant to "serve the Lord," for his neighbours in the very next cottage were very different from what they had been a time back. Indeed, it had been the talk of the neighbourhood, how that Dame Betty had been raised up from a bed of sickness following an acute attack of rheumatism, by putting her trust in the Lord. Her husband left her

in the morning crippled in bed, and came home to find her sweeping the house as well as ever, and praising the Lord. No wonder the neighbours talked, though the Methodists seemed to think it quite natural.

Then had he not heard himself John Wesley preaching in the market-place at Mapplewell during the summer fair, and seen the rough country lads held spell-bound, forgetting the mischief they had intended to do him ?

Well, what was he going to do ? A new household was about to be set up, whom were they going to serve ? "As for me and my house"—the words would not leave his mind, and there in the barn he knelt down hour after hour, his threshing, even his bride forgotten, until he made his decision, and yielded his soul to God. "Yes, we *will* serve the Lord," his heart cried.

The sun was high in the heavens as he hastened back to get into his wedding clothes, fearing he would be too late, and so he would have been but for the kindly interference of his fellow bell-ringers, who stopped the church clock till he arrived !

The wedding over, he had to explain to his young wife the change that had come over him, and that there would be no dancing at their wedding.

Now Betty was a wife of spirit and determined not to weakly submit, so she refused to join her husband in family prayers, and

took care to make as much upstir as possible while he was so employed. This caused great grief to her husband, but he held on his way, hoping to win her before long.

One day, however, when she was more trying than ever, he picked her up and carried her upstairs, and kneeling down with her beside him he poured out all his sorrow of heart in a torrent of words to the only One who could help him. He prayed for her in such touching language that she was moved in spite of herself, and began to feel very uncomfortable. The next day she did not refuse to join her husband, but was glad of his prayers, to which she added her own, and was soon trusting in Jesus and willing to say from her heart, "Yes, we will serve the Lord."

Some years later they had to move to the neighbouring town of Barnsley on account of the husband's ill-health. This was a great change, as the town then was a godless, wicked place, with a very ill-repute, but employment had been offered him by a linen-weaver which he felt he could not refuse. It must have been hard to bring their children into such surroundings, but if wickedness was rife in the streets, in their four-roomed cottage home God was honoured and loved.

It was a great trial that there was nowhere in the town where simple worship was conducted such as they had been accustomed to ;

but they opened their own house and invited in those of the neighbours who would come to read God's word, and for prayer and hymn singing. Not content with this, James Taylor used to go out in the streets and preach the glad tidings of God's love and grace, although he was often pelted with mud and stones and chased away by the crowd. Once he nearly lost his sight from the ill-treatment he received, and had he not been rescued by friends things might have gone hard with him.

Another time an ill-tempered woman ran after him and smeared her greasy black frying pan all over the back of his coat. In reply to her angry words he spoke so mildly and gently that she was ashamed, and on-lookers marvelled at the difference between this man and others. How could they know that he had learnt love and pity at the feet of the very One who had died for His murderers? Yet his behaviour made an impression on those rough untaught folk that no sermon could ever have done.

Little Hudson's grandfather, John Taylor, had followed in his father's footsteps, though by this time there was a chapel in Barnsley for them to attend on Sundays. Every one was sorely tried by the crowds of children, big and little, that swarmed in the streets, and got up to all kinds of mischief. Now John Taylor was a reed maker for the linen weavers, and he had a large workshop,

which he determined to throw open on Sunday afternoons to the children of the neighbourhood for a service. This was before the days of Sunday schools, and the children were ignorant and neglected. He received little encouragement from all to whom he spoke of his plan, but to his amazement the first Sunday six hundred children crowded in, and his shop was packed from end to end. A rowdy scene it must have been, but John had a way with children, and before many weeks were passed there was a marked difference in their behaviour, so that the most sceptical began to approve, and he had offers of help from most unexpected quarters.

Hudson and his sisters would never weary of stories such as these, though Barnsley was a very different place by this time.

They must often have heard too of their parents' seven years' courtship, which had ended so happily in the home they loved so well. Their father had been serving his apprenticeship to a chemist, and after a time was put in charge of a branch business at Conisborough, while his fiancée, Amelia, was acting as governess in a family at Castle Donnington. Travelling was not easy in those days and they seldom saw each other, but they wrote regularly and keenly sympathised with each other's interests. Amelia's prayers must often have joined with her lover's for the little villages scattered over the countryside, where young James would



go Sunday by Sunday and speak to those who would listen of their own need and God's wonderful way of meeting it. This time of separation drew them each nearer to the heavenly Father whom they loved, and in so doing drew them nearer to each other.

No wonder it was a happy home, or that the children grew up in an atmosphere of love and reverence for divine things that never left them all through life. God had great plans for these children, and the impressions of their early years and the careful training of their parents all had one end in view—fitting them for *His* purpose.

## CHAPTER III.

### A TENDER PLANT.

**H**AVE you ever thought that God has great plans for *you*? You cannot see into the future and know what lies before you. Even your parents who love you so much cannot do this, but every one who reads this is part of God's great plan and is of interest to Him. The father and mother of our story did not know what was God's plan for their little son, but they had given him to God, and they knew that the happiest state for every one is implicit obedience to the Master. They knew that if he were ever to be used of God he must learn self-control and love for others, be forgetful of himself and humble minded. So they began their training while he was still very young, though often they grieved at the thought that his delicate health would probably make it impossible for him to serve God in the way they had hoped.

Hudson was a merry little fellow, full of fun and life, and very fond of teasing his sister Amelia, though they were the best of friends. So you see little boys were very much the same a hundred years ago as they are to-day,

but I think that some who read this might think it very hard to be brought up as strictly as Hudson and Amelia were. Their father was a decided disciplinarian, and he did not think it was kind to allow faults in his children that would give them trouble in later life, and perhaps unfit them for the work they were called to do.

He told them the story of Eli and his two sons, Hophni and Phineas, who grew up to be such a grief to him, though he himself was a God-fearing man. We should be very surprised at this if we were not let into the secret, but it tells us that it was because, when they did wrong he did not restrain them, or as it says in the margin, "frowned not upon them." He was an easy-going, indulgent father, so his sons grew up headstrong and wilful, and it finally led to such wickedness that God had to destroy them both in one day. Things often have very small beginnings, but we have to look to see where they will end. If we went high up in the mountains we might see a little trickle of water bubbling out from under a stone, so small that we could step across it; but suppose we follow it down the hillside. Can it be this same trickle of water that has been swelling all the way till it is a beautiful stream flowing through the pastures? And then we follow it still further, and it becomes a great river, with a swift and strong current that carries all before it to the sea.

With this in his mind their father was very anxious that his children should begin with good habits. Punctuality was insisted upon, both out of consideration for others, and because much time can be wasted in a household if one or more members are unpunctual. He explained to them the value of time, and the children had only to look at the busy lives of their parents to realise this. If every day one person were one minute late for breakfast, that meant that four people were kept waiting and five minutes were lost, which in a week would mount up to thirty-five minutes, and how much more in a year ?

Then, too, with such a tidy mother and a methodical father, they had to learn to be tidy in their persons and in the home. This was not a wealthy household and the children were very simply dressed, but they were taught that their clothes must be clean and tidy, their hands and nails properly kept, and their hair well brushed and neat. The little girls each had her own work-basket standing ready on the dressing-table, so that she could at once repair the trouble if an accident occurred, or sew on a button as soon as it came off.

In the sitting-room it was just the same, for if every one left all his things lying about all day, a very uncomfortable state of affairs would soon prevail. Still the children must play, and no one minded a mess at such

times so long as all was put straight again.

This wonderful mother had a plan too for helping her little ones to tidiness. Often work or games might have to be interrupted for a meal, and the table must be cleared, though the things might be needed later. To meet this difficulty, one shelf in the large, old-fashioned bookcase was always kept empty and ready for anything that wanted a temporary resting-place out of sight behind its sheltering curtains. There it could stay till it was wanted again, but the shelf must always be left cleared and empty at bedtime. In this way they succeeded in keeping their room always comfortable and fit to receive a visitor if one should call in at unexpected times.

Another thing that the father was very anxious to teach was the value of money. He thought that if a thing is too easily obtained it is not valued as much as something that has cost some effort. So instead of giving his children pocket-money to spend as they liked, he only gave them pennies when they had earned them. They saw how hard their father worked in his shop to earn money, so did not feel it any hardship that they should work too for the pennies they wanted.

When they were very tiny a penny could be earned by sitting quite still for a stated time, which varied according to their age.

Does this seem silly to you? It may have seemed hard to the little ones, who no doubt were as restless and active as any child to-day, but their wise father knew that it needed practice to become self-controlled, and the thought of the promised reward helped them to make the effort.

- As they grew older there were many things they could do which would earn a penny—perhaps some little service for father in the shop, or something mother needed doing in the house, and then there would be another penny to add to the little store in the sitting-room cupboard, where each child had a little brown jar in which to keep his savings. Pennies so earned were too valuable to be lightly spent on sweets or other trifles, but were kept for something that might be really wanted, and whenever eleven pennies could be produced by one of the children, father would add one and give in exchange a shilling piece, which was a very coveted possession. Did they ever hear the story of their great grandparents' cup in the corner cupboard? But I am sure they did, so I will tell it to *you*.

When James and Betty Taylor first had to move from the country into Barnsley they found things very expensive. With themselves and five children to feed and clothe and rent to pay, and only twelve shillings a week to do it all, one would think it would be a hard matter to make both ends meet.

Yet there was still another claim on their income which they could not ignore, for had they not said in their early married days, "We will serve the Lord"? In the Bible they read of the Israelites who were commanded to give tithes of all their possessions, that is, a tenth part, to the Lord, and could they, being Christians, do any less? Both agreed that this was impossible, and they settled the matter by giving one ninth of their small income to the Lord and His interests. Week by week when James brought home his wages, one and sixpence would be dropped into the cup in the old corner cupboard in the kitchen, so that they might always be prepared when their Master brought any special need to their notice. What it must have cost them in self-denial we can easily guess, but their reward was not long in coming, for did the Lord not richly bless their household, answering their faith even unto the third and fourth generation?

And does it not warm our hearts to-day to read of such simple piety, and may we not well be stirred up to greater self-denial and effort for Christ's sake?

How the children's pennies were usually spent I do not know, but once when Hudson was quite a little boy there was a fair in Barnsley, which had caused a great deal of expectation in the family, as they had heard that a collection of stuffed birds and animals

was on show, as nearly as possible in their natural surroundings. Hudson, just having earned a penny, set off to the field not far off in great excitement, eager to see all that was to be seen, and proud in the possession of his penny. What was his dismay to find that the wonderful nature show was in an enclosure, and entrance could only be gained to it by paying twopence.

This was a blow, but he was not a child to be easily turned from his purpose. Another child might have gone shyly away, afraid to proceed any further, particularly as the man at the gate was somewhat surly looking. Hudson, however, found courage to approach the man, show his penny and explain it was the only one he had got, but that he did so long to see the birds and animals. He must have had a heart of stone, this gate-keeper, for he was deaf to all pleadings, even when it was pointed out to him by the little, curly-headed boy standing there so eagerly before him, that it would be better to have *one* penny than none at all !

When he found that it was quite useless, tears of disappointment filled his eyes and he ran home sobbing to his mother, to pour out all his troubles. His grief was so real that she took him in her arms and when he could listen she explained to him that if the price was twopence it would not be fair to let some people in for one penny, because others had paid the full price to see the



beautiful creatures. The man had to do his duty, even if it seemed unkind.

"But," she added, "you have been a good boy lately and I will gladly give you another penny, so that you may not miss seeing the show."

This soon chased the tears away and off he ran once more, secure of admittance this time, with his two pennies clasped tightly in his hand.

A love of nature in all its forms was cultivated and encouraged in the children, and many were the walks taken by them on holidays into the country, shared by their father, who told them delightful stories about birds, butterflies and flowers. They would come home with treasures of all sorts to be added to their collections, in which both parents took the keenest interest.

If their father could not go with them, the two elder children would take their hoops and set off by themselves, perhaps to the Lunn Woods, where they were never tired of searching for flowers and butterflies, and Hudson could always be trusted to look after and take care of his sister. They were taught never to carelessly pick and then throw away flowers, as many children do, but to bring them home, learning their names and characteristics thus add to their collections.

When Hudson had learnt to read, he became passionately fond of story-books, and spent much of his spare time devouring such

books as he could get hold of. It was a sore trial to him when bedtime came just as he was in the middle of some exciting adventure which so often happens, yet he was not allowed to read in bed, as his mother always came to take away the candle as soon as he was safely tucked in.

One day, however, the thought occurred to him that if he collected some of the candle ends that were kept for use in the cellar, he could light them when he had been left to himself and still go on reading lying comfortably in bed. His conscience pricked him at first, as he knew his mother would not approve, but the more he thought it over, the more attractive did the plan seem, and he determined to carry it out that very evening, as a visitor was coming, which would he knew keep his mother downstairs. If he had been a little older he would have realised that pockets are not the best place to keep candle ends, but it seemed to him a convenient place for his hoard until he could slip away to his bedroom.

This was not so easy, however, as the friend proved very entertaining, and had a fund of stories that at any other time would have held him spellbound, but the heat of the fire round which they were all gathered made him uncomfortably conscious of the contents of his pocket. He drew his mother's attention to the fact that it was bedtime, anxious as he was to get away; but she,

knowing his love of stories and not understanding his unusual urgency, was in no hurry to send him off, and kept him up later than usual.

At last he was released, but alas ! not in time to save his candle ends, and later his mother found him sobbing over the wreck of his treasured plan. It was perhaps his first act of deceit, and had it succeeded might have led him to further acts of a more serious kind, but we may be sure that he never forgot his mother's words as she took him in her arms and comforted his distress, telling him how he had grieved God as well as her by his attempted disobedience.

We do not like to be found out when we have done wrong, but often it is God's goodness to us in checking us at the beginning of a wrong course. There is many a one who has had cause to thank God that he was exposed at the first wrong step, and so led to turn his feet in the right direction.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TO DIRECT HIS STEPS.

**A**S the children grew older, their father made a habit of taking them apart and praying with them separately. His was no religion of duty, and it was his greatest joy to speak to his Father in heaven, and he longed that his children should early learn to bring all their wants and difficulties to His feet, and find in Him their Saviour and Friend. He taught them to value, and read for themselves, God's word, explaining to them that, just as our bodies need food to make them grow big and strong, so our souls need "the word" if they are to prosper and grow in spiritual power.

Such lessons made their impression, and it was very evident to the children that these things were real and vital to their parents, and they in their childish way began to understand that we need God's help and presence with us through the day if we want to be happy.

Many were the Christian friends who gathered in from time to time, drawn by the simple, Christ-like lives of Mr. and Mrs.

Taylor and the warmth of their presence and cheer. It was natural that the conversation should be chiefly about the Lord's interests both at home and abroad, and it made a great impression on the children's minds, especially when they heard of work in far away countries. They would listen with breathless interest to stories of missionaries in distant lands, and sooner or later the talk would come round to China, which was very much laid on their father's heart. He could not understand why so little effort was made by the Christian churches to carry the gospel to this dark land with its teeming millions, for at that time there was only one Protestant missionary centre in Canton, and a recently opened hospital in charge of an American doctor.

They would hear of missionaries leaving England to go to India, Africa and other parts, but no one seemed to think there was any opening in China, and as Hudson listened to the conversation his heart would burn with longing for the time when he himself would be old enough to take the gospel to China. Amelia, too, was fired by her brother's enthusiasm, but the parents would shake their heads sadly, for they feared in their hearts that their son would never be strong enough for such a life.

Still, it was not only for souls in foreign lands that they cared, for often Hudson would go with his father to the little villages

round their town when he was preaching. It was a time of revival and great earnestness in preaching the gospel, and many were the souls gathered in, and it must have had its effect on the boy as he saw one and another come to Jesus as their Saviour. Inside the home-circle, too, they knew how their mother prayed for the conversion of their servants and shop-assistants, and sooner or later it seemed that all these prayers were answered, so we cannot wonder that they grew to look on prayer as something very real.

When Hudson was eleven he went to a day-school for two years, and in spite of constant absence from ill-health, he made rapid progress, as it was his delight to study, and it was difficult to prevent him working beyond his strength. He made friends at this time with boys of his own age, but he was not good enough at games to be very popular. The school life was a great change from all that had gone before, and almost unconsciously he began to slacken in reading the Bible, and gave less time to prayer. At a time when he needed more help to keep him from temptation he grew careless and unsettled in his mind.

When he left school he went for a time into his father's shop, still taking some hours each day for study. He was keenly interested in the dispensing side of the business, and would read up about the different medicines

in his father's books, and altogether this was a very happy time to him. Still his mother watched him with anxiety, as she knew that all was not right between his soul and God, and many were the prayers offered on his behalf.

Living in such a household he could not be entirely careless, and once while still at school God spoke to him very definitely at a gospel preaching, and though he did not respond immediately, he never forgot the call or the directness of the appeal. The speaker was Mr. Reed of Tasmania, and he told of an experience when he voluntarily spent the night in a condemned cell with six convicts who were to die on the following morning for their misdeeds.

One of the men confessed to having committed murder, and told a sad story of what had led up to it. He was one day walking up Cataract Hill, not far from Launceston, when he thought he heard a voice saying, "Gardener, give Me thy heart." As he was alone, and no one near, he was much startled, and the text flashed through his mind, "My son, give me thy heart." Could it have been God speaking? There was no one else near.

Well for him had he done as James Taylor did on his wedding morning, and given his heart then and there into the keeping of his heavenly Father.

Though disturbed in mind he was not

convinced, and the old argument, "There is plenty of time," won the day. He meant to be a Christian some day, but it was not convenient just now with his way to make in the world, and he pushed all better thoughts from his mind and went on his way. If only he had known what lay ahead of him, how different his decision might have been !

That night he and his partner were alone in the little shack that they shared, when the latter got out his hoard of savings to count it. All told it only amounted to a few pounds, but it represented wealth to poor Gardener and was enough to serve the devil's purposes.

The longing to possess it grew stronger and stronger until even the thought of murder did not terrify him. It is enough to say that the crime was committed, and this man, who such a short while before had resisted God's appeal, was now to be ushered into His presence in an unsaved condition. Whether the poor fellow finally gave his heart to God at this the eleventh hour, even as the thief on the cross, and found peace and mercy in believing, I do not know, but the story told so impressively touched many a heart beside Hudson's, warning them of the danger of resisting God's offers of mercy.

When Hudson was fourteen years old he was again aroused ; this time by reading a tract that led to his conversion. It was a simple story of a half-witted boy called Joseph, who though his mind was clouded



as to earthly things had a childlike trust in Jesus as his Saviour. "Yes, Joseph is the chief of sinners," he would say. "But Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And why not poor Joseph?"

Why not, indeed! If we are content to take our place as poor sinners Jesus is longing to be our Saviour, and it was this simple truth that led Hudson to take his place as a sinner, and Jesus as his Saviour.

For a time he returned to his old habits of prayer and Bible study, but when a year later he started life as a junior clerk in one of the Barnsley banks he again grew careless, with the inevitable result that he drifted away from his early faith. We must remember that he was only fifteen at the time, and his companions at the bank were a godless set; and perhaps he did not shew his colours and witness for Christ at the first opportunity. How many a lad has lost his chance of being a testimony to God in a dark place because he has not confessed Christ boldly at the first opportunity. It may have been the fear of being laughed at, or it may have been the fear of not being able to live up to his profession, but whatever it was it has served the tempter's purpose, and the light that might have illuminated all is hidden under a bushel.

And so it was with Hudson. He began to envy his friends their worldly pleasures, which fired his imagination, though they

could never satisfy his heart. Doubts began to creep into his mind as he heard the sceptical talk of his friends, and he grew more and more restless and unhappy. His parents tried to help him, but he did not seem able to speak much of his trouble to them, and they could only pray for him. In his sister Amelia, however, now thirteen years old, he found a confidant who was always ready to listen to his troubles. Although such a child she had very definitely yielded herself to her Saviour, and she did all she could to comfort and help her brother. She made up her mind to pray three times every day for him until peace came to him once more, and all his doubts were set at rest.

At last one day he had a holiday, and going in search of a book to read he came across a gospel tract that looked interesting. He thought he would just read the story at the beginning and leave the moral which he knew would follow it, but little did he know how God was working on his behalf.

His mother was away from home at the time, and that afternoon, feeling she had more time at her disposal than was usual when surrounded by her busy household, she went to her room and locking the door knelt down to pray for her son. The hours slipped away and found her still upon her knees until at last she had a feeling that her prayers were answered and that there was no need to go on praying. She could not know that in

the old warehouse at home, where Hudson had gone to read in solitude, he was also kneeling, thanking and praising God that all his doubts were gone. One little sentence speaking of the finished work of Christ was used to open his eyes, and he there and then gave himself afresh to God and to His service, and from that time forward he never had any doubt as to his soul's salvation.

On her return a fortnight later, Hudson told his mother his joyful secret, and was much surprised to hear that she had already been conscious of the answer to her prayers, although she could not, of course, know how it had come about. It is no wonder that Hudson came to realise that prayer is a mighty power and not a formal habit, or that he began more and more to rely on God's promises in a very simple and practical way.

Looking back, he used to say he was glad that he had gone through that period of doubt, painful though it was, as he had so often joined in criticising the Christian lives he saw around him, contrasting them with what he saw in the Bible.

After being restored, he determined with God's help to live with greater nearness to what he saw was proposed in the word, and to claim the promises quite simply that were God's provision for His children. In spite of many ups and downs in his Christian life, there is no doubt that it was this direction of

purpose and simplicity of faith in taking God at His word that forms the most striking part of his story, and led him again and again to attempt the impossible. God delights to honour such faith as this and we can only say as we read, "With God *all things* are possible."

## CHAPTER V.

“IN QUIETNESS AND IN CONFIDENCE.”

**I**T seems that Hudson had never quite lost his boyish wish to go to China, and now with his fresh spiritual development and desire to serve God, the thought returned to his mind again and again. Then there came a day when, while in the act of prayer, he definitely felt that the Lord had called him to go to China, and he doubted no more. How it was to come about he had no idea, as there appeared to be no possible prospects of his being sent out as a missionary by any society at that time, but young as he was, he realised that if God had called him to go to China He would Himself provide the means to take him there.

So he determined to wait God's time, and in the meantime to learn all he could that would fit him for such a life. The knowledge gained in his father's shop would, he knew, stand him in good stead in a foreign land, as many a fast closed door is opened in times of sickness to one who is able to help. So he set to work to learn all he could about medicines and prescribing for simple ailments, and

was especially interested in any slight surgical cases that came his way. Then he felt that the study of languages would help him with the very difficult Chinese language that he would have to learn later, so he set to work to study Latin, Greek and Hebrew, getting up at six o'clock every morning to fit it in with his day's work.

He was fortunate enough to have a copy of St. Luke's gospel in Chinese lent him by a friend, and this he felt was a treasure indeed, for though he had no dictionary to help him, and one in Chinese was far beyond his slender means, yet by comparing it with his English Testament he was able to pick out quite a number of the characters. In this way by slow degrees he began to make a dictionary of his own. In a letter to his sister Amelia he says that he had discovered and written down four hundred and fifty-three of the most common characters with their meanings, that he had picked out about another two hundred which he was pretty certain were correct, besides many others that were not fully proved as to their meanings.

All this meant a great deal of hard work, but it was a labour of love, as he felt it was just the first step towards getting to China, where his heart lay.

About this time he heard that the Congregational minister possessed a book on China written by Dr. Medhurst, himself a mis-

sionary in that land. This was one of the best works on the subject at that time, and Hudson went to see if he could borrow it. The minister received him kindly and gladly agreed to lend him the book, but on hearing of his hopes and longings and his belief that God had called him to go to China, he inquired how he proposed to get there. Hudson replied that he did not know, but that it seemed probable that he would have to go as the Twelve and the Seventy had done, without purse or scrip, relying on Him by whom he had been sent, to supply all his needs.

Kindly placing his hand on the lad's shoulder the minister said, "Ah, my boy, as you grow older you will become wiser than that. Such an idea would do very well when Christ Himself was on earth, but not now."

He certainly grew older, but did he grow wiser? We shall see as we follow his story, but perhaps this was one of the things that we read are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes.

There was still another way in which Hudson could begin the preparation for his life work. Young as he was, he realised that crossing the sea does not necessarily make one a soul-winner. He knew there were plenty of souls in Barnsley that needed saving, and he determined, with God's help, to begin there. He would take tracts to dis-

tribute in the poorer districts, and visit the lodging-houses of the town, which at that period were dens of misery and vice. Where he got a chance he spoke a few words, and if not he gave a booklet, with the prayer that it might carry blessing with it. In this, and every other way he could, he quietly held on his way, waiting till he should see his path clear for the next step.

When he was nineteen years old an opportunity came for him to be apprenticed to Dr. Hardey, a well-known doctor in Hull, and an earnest Christian worker. A kindly, humorous man, popular with his patients and beloved of all children, he soon won Hudson's esteem, and was on his side attracted to the young assistant, so eager to learn and so conscientious and thorough in all he did.

He had not long been installed in the surgery before he had everything in perfect order, just as he had been taught at home, and the doctor was only too glad to leave all in his capable hands, for with a large private practice, as well as various other activities, he was a very hardworking man and had very little spare time. It was not long before he found out that his new assistant could be a help in other ways as well, and many were the quiet times of prayer they spent together, returning to their work all the better for the time thus spent in each other's company before the throne of grace.

If there were a fault to be found with the



existing arrangement, it was that it was too comfortable and easy a life. Hudson had realised for some time that a true missionary must learn to endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, that he must not pamper himself in any way, or he may become unfitted for service ; so while in his parents' home he had voluntarily given up some of his daily comforts, and had denied himself in various ways, not with any idea of acquiring merit by his self-discipline, but so that he might become accustomed to it.

But here, in Dr. Hardey's household, where he was a welcome inmate, it was not so easy, and he felt that his life though useful was not exactly the kind of training he needed for China. Sometimes it seemed to him further off than ever, but in spite of this he had no doubts whatever of his call to go there ; and the more difficult the way seemed, the greater did the need appear to him, and his longing to meet it grew in intensity.

At this time he came in contact with some Christians who helped him very considerably, and encouraged him in his Christian pathway. He was feeling very keenly the loss of his home life, and the apparent impossibility of the fulfilment of his aspirations, and he needed a helping hand and a word of cheer to help him on his way. He attended the meetings on Lord's day morning and was impressed by the evident power in their midst. The

presence of Christ at these times seemed such a reality to him that it gave him just the personal touch he needed, while their readings of the Bible and addresses helped much to build up his soul. He heard too from them of George Muller of Bristol and the wonderful work he was doing for orphan children. It encouraged him, as nothing else could have done, to hear of such a work being carried on by a poor man, who had no means whatever but the resources of prayer. One can imagine him saying to himself, "If God's resources are so great that He can support that man and his hundreds of children, how easy it will be for Him to send me to China when the time comes."

Before long he had to move from his comfortable quarters, as with the doctor's growing family his room was needed ; but it was arranged that he should live with his aunt, whose home was not far off, and who, having no children of her own, was glad to welcome him into her household. It seemed a very happy arrangement, and Hudson much appreciated the comfortable surroundings and pleasant evenings. Still, uncomfortable thoughts assailed him and led to his leaving this house and going into lodgings by himself in a poor suburb of the town.

He had felt for some time that he ought to give at least a tenth part of his salary to the Lord's work, and this he had been in the habit of doing, but now that he no longer

lived with Dr. Hardey his income had been increased to cover the cost of his board at his aunt's. If he gave a tenth of the whole amount he would not be able to afford to live with his aunt, yet he felt it was the right thing to do. With simple directness he stood to his principles, and engaged a bed-sitting-room in a workman's cottage, undertaking to board himself. It was not a very cheerful prospect, for the cottage looked on to a canal which was really only a deep ditch—the convenient dump for all the refuse of the neighbourhood, and commonly spoken of as Drainside. It was a small cottage with two rooms downstairs, one on each side of the front door, overlooking the Drain, and two more upstairs. One of the downstairs rooms was now to become his home, and a more complete change from the home he was leaving could not be imagined.

The cottage belonged to a sailor, who was usually away at sea, and his wife, with a family of little ones round her, was glad to let one of her rooms for three shillings a week. She was an earnest Christian, and in her way did what she could to make her new lodger comfortable, though the room only contained bare necessities.

Here Hudson was surrounded by poverty and poor, mean streets, and in his walks to and from the surgery he could not but feel it pressing on him, for he had a very tender heart for others, and longed to help these

people, who were so near to him yet so different. He spent his long, lonely evenings in study and prayer, but while he still longed after China, he did not forget the needs of those within his reach, and spent much time in preaching the gospel and visiting from house to house where he could get an entry.

Lonely he must often have been, but his conscience told him that he was right, and he had sought the Lord's guidance and felt he had His approval, so he quietly went on his way in spite of criticism.

## CHAPTER VI.

“I WILL TRUST AND NOT BE AFRAID.”

**I**T was well for Hudson at this period that he had been trained in habits of self-discipline as a child, for it was now to stand him in good stead. His mother was naturally anxious when she heard that he was to board himself, for she feared, and not without reason, that he would stint himself unduly and suffer in consequence. His housekeeping was of the simplest description, and he began to find that he could save about two-thirds of his income, so that he might have it available for others. He tells us that in his experience the less he spent on himself and the more on others the happier he was, and the more his soul prospered.

In a letter to his mother to reassure her we are let into some of the secrets of his ways of economising. He gave up using butter and milk and luxuries of every kind, but said he did not stint himself as the cold weather gave him a hearty appetite. He writes: “I have found some brown biscuits which are really as cheap as bread, eighteen-pence a stone, and much nicer. For breakfast

I have biscuit and herring, which is cheaper than butter (three for a penny, and half a one is enough) with coffee. For dinner I have, at present, a prune-and-apple pie. Prunes are two- or three-pence a pound and apples tenpence a peck. I use no sugar but loaf, which I powder, and at fourpence halfpenny a pound I find it is cheaper than the coarser kind. Sometimes I have roast potatoes and tongue, which is as inexpensive as any other meat. For tea I have biscuit and apples. I take no supper, or occasionally a little biscuit and apple. Sometimes I have a rice pudding, a few peas boiled instead of potatoes, and now and then some fish. By being wide-awake I can get cheese at fourpence to sixpence a pound. . . . So you see at little expense I enjoy many comforts. To these add a home where every want is anticipated and 'the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,' and if I were not happy and contented I should deserve to be miserable."

Contented he certainly was, as his own comfort was not a thing which weighed with him, if by doing without he could further the Master's interests. We have heard recently of the poverty and scarcity of food from which many of the Lord's people have been suffering in Russia, Germany and elsewhere, but do we ourselves know very much of real self-denial for the Lord's sake? We must remember too that this was a growing lad of nineteen, in the full vigour of youth, when,

if ever, he might have been tempted to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of life, for we are only young once; but he voluntarily denied himself so that he might become better fitted for his future life-work, and that he might have more to use for others on behalf of His master.

All this time he was praying most earnestly that the Lord would open the way for him to take the gospel to China, whose needs pressed on him more and more, as he thought of the twelve million souls who die there year by year without even having heard of Christ. “I feel as if I could not live if something is not done for China,” he once said.

At the same time he felt the seriousness of his position should he manage to get means to take him to the land of his dreams. He realised that he would be alone in a strange land, dependent on God alone for his supplies and indeed for everything—and what if his faith failed? God would not fail—that he was sure of—but had he the right kind of faith, or would he break down himself? Then the thought came to him that if he would have to trust to God in China, why not trust Him for his needs in England? It was true that his salary was more than enough for his necessities, but he thought of a way of putting his faith to the test, to see whether God would answer his prayers and respond in blessing.

His salary was paid to him quarterly, and

Dr. Hardey being a very busy man and somewhat forgetful, had told him to give him a reminder when it fell due, as otherwise it would certainly be forgotten. This Hudson had always done, but now decided that he would make it a test of his trust in God, and pray that He Himself would remind the doctor of the day and thus supply his needs.

As the quarter day drew near he spent much time in prayer, asking that he might be confirmed in his faith by receiving a direct answer to his request. The day came and went, and nothing was said on either side, but he continued to wait quietly on the Lord, until at last one Saturday night, after settling his weekly bill he found he had only one half-crown left. Still, his needs had been met up to that point and he had lacked nothing.

Sunday was a very happy day, he writes, and his heart was brimming over with blessing, in spite of his almost empty pockets. The evenings were usually spent in visiting various lodging-houses in the very poor parts of the town, and at the end of his last service, a poor man came up to him and asked him if he would go and pray with his wife who, he feared was dying. It was late at night and the man said he had already tried to get the priest to go, but he had asked for eighteen-pence as payment, and the man had not a penny, so he refused to go.

Remembering his solitary half-crown and that, while he had enough food in the house



for breakfast, the next morning he would have nothing for dinner if he gave away his last coin, he began to wish it were in small change so that he could give the man sixpence. Down a narrow court they went, and up a flight of stairs, and then into a miserable attic, with the poor mother and a tiny baby lying on a wretched bed and several half-starved children huddled together.

What a scene it was !

"Ah !" he thought, "if only I had change I could give these poor people one and sixpence to buy some food," but it did not occur to him that he might give them the whole half-crown and trust God for his next dinner. He tried to talk to the poor woman and give her the comfort she needed, but words would not come, so he knelt down thinking he could at least pray for them. But this was worse than ever, for the conviction came to him that he was nothing better than a hypocrite, for he could not trust God unless he had his half-crown safe in his pocket.

He struggled through with the form of prayer somehow and then rose to his feet. Taking the money from his pocket, he held it out to the man and told him that it was his last half-crown, and that in giving it to them he was giving his all, in spite of the fact that he appeared to them well-off. Immediately the burden seemed to roll away and

his spirit was freed and he was able to speak to them of Christ. His money was gone, but peace and joy had come in full measure and he went home rejoicing in the Lord.

As he knelt at his bedside that night he reminded the Lord of His own word, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord," and quite simply He told the Lord of His needs, and asked that He would in some way come in to meet them. He had still a plate of porridge left for breakfast, and while he was eating it next morning the postman's knock sounded and his landlady brought him a letter. It was a surprise, as he rarely got letters on Monday morning, and the writing was unknown to him. On opening the envelope, however, he was still more astonished, for there was no letter, but a pair of kid gloves folded inside a blank sheet of paper, and out of the glove fell—half a sovereign !

"Praise the Lord," he exclaimed. "Four hundred per cent for twelve hours' investment—that is good interest ! How glad the merchants of Hull would be if they could lend their money at such a rate."

The Lord had not forgotten him, and he was much cheered and encouraged to go on in his path of faith. His need was met for the moment, but however careful one may be ten shillings does not last very long when it has to supply rent and food ; and still there was no mention of the salary owing to him.

At the end of a fortnight he was again at the end of his resources, and being Saturday the rent was due for his room and he had nothing with which to meet it. Mrs. Finch was a poor woman, and he knew she needed the money, and moreover it was due; and he was much troubled as to how he should act. He could easily get the money by reminding his employer that it was overdue; it was not that that troubled him; but if he had to do this he would feel that he had failed in his pathway of faith. If he failed in England, how could he hope not to fail in China?

All day long on Saturday, in the intervals of his work, he raised his heart in prayer to the God who, he felt, could not fail him in his need; and he had the feeling that he was not to speak to Dr. Hardey, but that he was to wait his Father's time and way.

About five o'clock that afternoon the doctor came into the surgery, where Hudson was busy with some dispensing, and after a few minutes' talk he said, "By the way, Taylor, is not your salary due again?" The relief was so great that Hudson could barely steady his voice to say that it was overdue some time. Surely God had come in and heard his prayers, and the answer had come; but the next moment his spirits sank, for the doctor said, "Oh! I am so sorry you did not remind me. You know how busy I am. I wish I had thought of it a little sooner,

for only this afternoon I sent all the money I had to the bank, otherwise I would pay you at once."

The disappointment was so great that he was glad to escape from the room without replying, as the pan he was stirring boiled over and gave him the necessary opportunity. Left alone, he again betook himself to prayer, until comfort came to him. God knew his need and surely would not fail him. The first part of his prayer was already answered, for had not the doctor remembered his overdue salary without any reminder? Now it only needed the money for his immediate necessities, and his Father might be going to provide this in some other way.

Hour by hour slipped away, and still the light burned in the little surgery. He felt unwilling to leave, yet had no reason to stay, but at last at ten o'clock he was preparing to go, glad to think that he would not have to face his landlady that night, for she would certainly have gone to bed, when he heard a step outside.

The doctor entered, laughing heartily, and asked for the ledger, telling Hudson that one of his richest patients had just come in to pay his bill. He said he felt he must get this account off his mind, and so had come in at that late hour to settle it.

Hudson also was amused at such unusual urgency in a wealthy man, who could send a cheque at any time, but it did not occur

to him that the man was God's messenger until Dr. Hardey handed him some of the notes, saying, "By the way, Taylor, you might as well take these notes. I have no change, but can give you the balance next week."

Joy filled his heart, his Father had not forgotten him, and best of all, he could go to China and trust God for his needs !

## CHAPTER VII.

### NOTHING TOO HARD.

**S**OON after this, Hudson began to be perplexed as to his immediate future. He felt he had learned all he could from Dr. Hardey, and he had saved up enough money for his outfit to go to China. To travel as a passenger would be beyond his means at present, but so great was his longing to get started, that he thought of going "before the mast" if an opportunity should occur. His parents, however, were very much against this, and thought he should stay longer in England and gain more experience, and as friends also took this view, he felt it must be the leading of God, and accepted it as such.

He had been corresponding for some time past with a London society called the China Evangelisation Society, and they had offered to pay his medical fees if he would go to London and study as a doctor in preparation for going to China. This he would have been glad to do if he could have got a post as doctor's assistant, so that he could earn enough to pay his way, but try as he would he could not hear of any such post near

enough to the hospital to be any use. Then Dr. Hardey, anxious to keep him, offered to help him with medical work at the hospital in Hull, but to do this he would have had to bind himself for a specified time, and this he did not feel able to do, as he did not know when the call might come to China.

Finally he decided to go to London. He had saved up a little money above and beyond what he had for his outfit, and an uncle living in Soho had invited him to go there to stay on his arrival in town until he could make other arrangements. He privately thought that it would be very difficult for him to find work that he could fit in with his studies at the hospital, because he did not feel it would be right to bind himself in any way for a set period. This proved to be the case, but Hudson was in no way dismayed by the circumstance, as he had already decided to commit his way entirely to the Lord, and trust Him either to provide suitable work or else to maintain him in some other way while he was studying. He did not tell his parents this, and they, supposing that he had made some kind of arrangement, and knowing that his hospital expenses were to be paid, did not enquire further into his plans.

So it came about that at twenty years old he reached London by a coasting steamer from Hull one foggy Sunday morning, with high hopes for the future, and a quiet confi-

dence in the promises of God, but very little money in his pockets. Some of the passengers went ashore, but Hudson with a few others spent the day on board, glad of the quiet time to wait on God for guidance as to his future plans.

The next morning he went to the boarding house in Soho where his uncle and also a cousin had rooms. Here he was warmly received and soon settled down, sharing a room with his cousin to reduce expenses ; but the change between the quiet of his Drainside lodging and the rush and bustle of a London boarding house was complete. He could not but miss the Christian atmosphere to which he had been accustomed, first in his home at Barnsley and then in the doctor's house at Hull, and he found that both his uncle and cousin strongly disapproved of his plans, or rather his lack of plans, for supporting himself during his hospital course.

"Talk of trusting God," his cousin would say, "one must trust one's own exertions too."

His father had offered to support him while he was studying, but Hudson knew that it would be difficult for him to do so, owing to business losses ; and so, unwilling to be a burden, and anxious also to still further prove the promises and goodness of God, he refused the offer. If his relatives did not understand his motives, he felt sure of getting sympathetic advice from Mr. Pearse, the honorary secretary of the China Evange-



lisation Society, which he intended to join. How far this was going back on his first idea of going to China, as the apostles went to the cities of Judah in faith for their daily needs, it is not for us to say. The Society appeared to have the same aims as his own, and their offer of help had come to him at a time when he was perplexed as to what to do, and it is very natural to each of us to wish to have some kind of human prop, even if we are relying on God.

It was somewhat of a blow to him on going to see Mr. Pearse to find that his case would have to be considered by the committee, and nothing could be settled until he had filled in forms and obtained testimonials, and that it might be some weeks, or even longer, before anything could be decided. The committee had no idea of the years of soul exercise that lay behind his offering himself as a candidate, and they did not know the burning love for souls, and especially for China, that filled the whole heart and thoughts of this young man from the north. In the meantime his money was getting low and he would soon be in difficulties unless the way was made clear for him. It was a very searching test, and his cousin was constantly urging him to do as everyone else did, and think of himself a bit.

In a letter to his mother he says, "How sweet it is to be dependent on the Lord for everything. . . . All, all is best as He sees

fit to guide. And He does guide and provide, both in temporal and spiritual matters, as long as we trust in Him. . . . Never mind results. . . . Let us leave them all to Him. . . . While unbelief sees only the difficulties, faith sees God between itself and them." His parents were very concerned when they heard of his difficulties, and his father wrote offering him a partnership in his business ; but tempting as this offer must have been to him in his unsettled position, he felt that God's call was too great a reality to be put thus lightly on one side for his own personal advancement.

While awaiting the committee's decision he began his medical studies in the room he shared with his cousin, and the effect of his quiet confidence and waiting upon God began to shew itself in the awakening interest of his cousin to divine things. It was not for nothing that he saw the peace and joy that comes even in the most trying circumstances to those who quietly rest in the Lord ; and before many months were gone by he also was witnessing in the boarding house to the saving power of God.

After some few weeks of delay, Hudson was formally accepted as a candidate, and authorised to begin his studies at the London Hospital at Mile End. His thankfulness at the removal of all the obstacles may be well imagined, and the happiness with which he entered on his medical course. It was a four

mile walk each way to and from the hospital, and as he could not afford the threepenny bus fare, there was nothing to be done but to go on foot ; and this he did, for while he records how the Lord supplied his needs, often to his surprise and delight, there was no money for anything but absolute necessities.

We often hear of men who have endured all kinds of hardship with fortitude to attain some great end, or men who have taken great risks to make themselves a name, or to win honour and glory ; but here was one, hardly more than a lad, who was so filled with the desire of carrying the glad tidings of the gospel to those who were in darkness, that he was prepared to sacrifice all his prospects, to leave those he loved, and even to deny himself the common necessities of life so that he might attain his end and respond to the call of God. He could not afford the boarding-house meals, and having had some experience in boarding himself in Hull, and economical living, he decided to do the same in London. Whether it was really necessary to go to the lengths of self-denial to which he did at this time it is not easy to say, but it gives us a little idea of his determination and spirit of self-sacrifice, and above all his love of souls.

It was November when Hudson started work at the hospital, and London at this time of year is anything but plesaaant, even

to those who can supply themselves with every comfort and return each night after a busy day to a well cooked meal and comfortable home. But what it must have been to a lad, far from strong, with a four mile tramp night and morning in all weathers on a very cheap and insufficient diet, it is not difficult to imagine. He would pass brightly lighted shops sending out appetising odours, and displaying attractive food in the windows, yet all he allowed himself was a twopenny loaf of brown bread. This was his supper and breakfast for the next morning, and in order that the division should be equally made he would get the baker to cut it in two for him in the shop, for otherwise hunger might get the better of him at night, with the result that there would be very little left for breakfast. For dinner he supplied himself with apples, and that with water to drink formed his sole diet during that cold November and December. Still he did not complain, for he had been able to pay his way so far, he was making headway with his studies, and he was proving that God's resources were greater than his needs. In writing to his mother he assured her that his health was not suffering, and that every one said how well he looked, and that he did not find the long walk so tiring as at first. "But," he adds, "the profane conversation of some of the students is utterly sickening, and I need all your prayers."

What did they think of him, those students whose conversation could be described as profane? We may be sure that he did not lose any opportunity of letting them know whose he was and whom he served. Some no doubt laughed, and others perhaps admired and half envied his courage, but may we not think that there must have been those who came to realise that some power lay behind his quiet, unobtrusive behaviour and bearing that was not only of this world.

It has been said that the more we trust the Lord the further He will lead us in the path of faith, so that we may learn to trust Him still more; and this was now to be the case. Always ready to help others, Hudson had been in the habit since coming to London of drawing from the City office of a shipping firm the monthly allowance of his previous landlady and sending it to her direct, thus saving her a small amount in commission. At this time he received a letter from her asking him to let her have the money as punctually as possible, as her rent was almost due and she had no other means of paying it. As it happened, he was very busy at the time working for a scholarship examination, and could not spare the time in the middle of the day to call at the office. So having enough money in hand for the purpose he sent it off to her, thinking he would refund himself as soon as the examination was over. When, how-

ever, he called later at the office he found to his dismay that they could not pay him the money as Mrs. Finch's husband had deserted from his ship and gone off to the gold diggings. Hudson explained his predicament, but though sympathetic they could not act without instructions, and he was obliged to leave without any satisfaction.

Soon, however, the thought came to him that he was dependent on the Lord all the time, and that He knew the position and could supply his need accordingly, so instead of being cast down, he told the Lord all about it and soon peace and joy returned to him. That same evening while stitching some sheets of notes of lectures together he accidentally pricked his finger, but it was such a slight affair that he forgot all about it immediately after. The next day while at the hospital he began to feel very sick and ill, and by the afternoon his hand and arm became so painful that he could not hold a pen. Unable to go on working he began to put away his things, explaining how ill he felt to the demonstrator, who was a very skilful surgeon. The surgeon gave it as his opinion that he had cut himself while dissecting, but on examining his hand could see no signs of a cut or scratch of any kind. Suddenly Hudson remembered his prick of the previous evening, and on telling the surgeon, he remarked, "You had better get a hansom, drive home as fast as you can and

arrange your affairs, for you are a dead man."

He records that his first feeling was one of sorrow that after all he would not be able to go to China, but on thinking it over, it came to him that God had certainly called him, and that if he had work to do in China he would not die until he had done it. The surgeon was a sceptic, and the opportunity was too good to miss, suffering though he was; so Hudson told him that it would be his greatest joy to go to his Master in glory, but that he felt sure he would not die, as he believed there was work for him on earth. The surgeon, however, was insistent in urging his return home immediately, and not without reason.

A hansom was quite out of the question, as he had no money to pay for one, so he set about walking, and with the help of an omnibus part of the way at length reached his lodgings in Soho in an exhausted condition. He asked for some hot water to bathe his hand, and spoke earnestly to the maid who brought it about her soul, feeling that it might be almost his last opportunity, and then after lancing the finger to get out the poison he fainted away and had to be carried to his bed.

An uncle who lived near by was sent for, who insisted upon calling his own doctor, in spite of Hudson's remonstrances, as he knew he could not afford to pay the bill. His uncle,

however, undertook to bear the cost, and also insisted upon supplying him with the nourishing food ordered by the doctor, which would otherwise have been an impossibility. In the midst of all his suffering Hudson begged that no one should write to tell his parents of his illness, as he did not wish them to come and find him in such a state, and his money almost at an end. He knew they would in their love supply his needs, and he wanted to see how God would come in for him, as by this time he felt convinced that he would live, and he was encouraged to wait upon God to clear up his difficulties. As they knew he was studying hard with an examination in view his parents were not surprised at getting no letter from him, and he did not write to let them know until the worst was over and he was on the mend.

After several weeks he was able to get up and at last to leave his room, and with assistance get downstairs on to the sofa. Here the doctor found him one day in a very exhausted state, and he advised him to get away to the country as soon as possible, so that he might the sooner be fit to return to work. Common sense urged him in the same direction, and it is easy to imagine how he must have longed for home and his mother's care in his weak state, yet he was all but penniless, and unless he told his friends of his needs how could it be managed?

As he lay there he poured out his heart to



his Father in heaven, for nothing need be kept back from Him, and he told Him how he longed to have his faith strengthened by seeing Him come in and meet his need apart from any human means ; and he asked for guidance as to what he should do.

After a time it seemed to him that his mind was being directed towards going again to the shipping office, but he reminded the Lord of his great weakness, of the distance to the office and that he had no money to pay for the bus ride, and also that it seemed very unlikely that any help should come from that direction. After praying again he still felt the urge to go, and concluded that it *was* the Lord's way for him, and that if he were to be sent to Cheapside his Father would give him strength enough to get there. Impossible as it may seem, he set out to walk the two miles to the office, and in spite of many intervals for rest, and often pausing to lean up against shop-windows, he at length arrived and thankfully seated himself on the steps to gain strength enough to mount the stairs to the first floor.

He was received kindly by the same clerk, who at once said, "I am so glad you have come, for it turns out that it was an able seaman of the same name that ran away. The mate is still on board ; the ship has just reached Gravesend and will be up very soon. I shall be glad to give you the half-pay up to date, for doubtless it will reach his wife

more safely through you. We all know what temptations beset the men when they arrive at home after a voyage."

On explaining about his recent illness and his thankfulness at receiving the money, the clerk insisted on taking him inside and giving him a share of his lunch while he rested before returning home. The journey back was very much easier, as he felt justified in going by bus now that he had money in hand, and though his body might be weak, his spirit was full of joy for the way his needs had been supplied. The next day he set off to his doctor's surgery, as now that he had the money he did not wish to leave his uncle to settle the bill; but the kind surgeon refused to allow him to pay anything but a few shillings for drugs he had had, as he was a medical student.

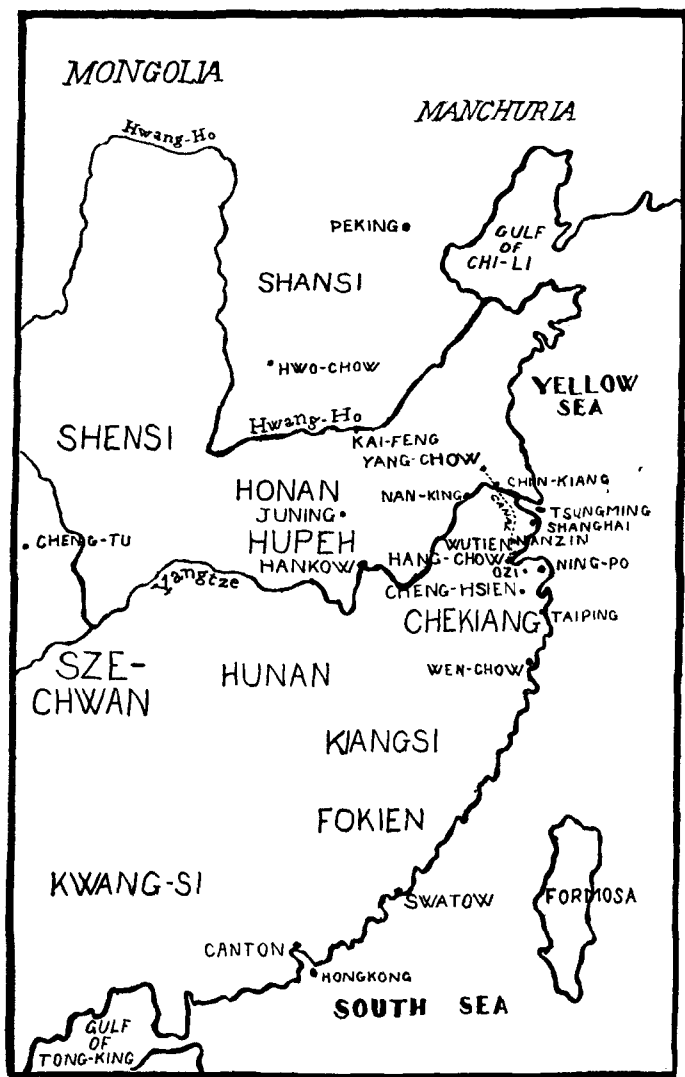
Counting up the money left, Hudson found he had just enough to take him home to Barnsley, so turning to the doctor, who he knew was not a Christian, he told him why he had come to London and how he had been supported by faith, and then went on to tell him of his penniless condition when on the previous day he had been ordered into the country, and how he had gone to the office and now had just the amount he needed.

It was a touching story, and so told that the doctor, incredulous at first, at the end was completely broken down and said with tears in his eyes, "I would give all the world

for a faith like yours." And yet it is to be had without money and without price ! Well for us if we were, young and old, to ask ourselves how much we have ever ventured on the promises of God. We may have trusted Him for our eternal salvation, and happy the boy or girl who has done that, but have we ever put God to the test in our daily lives ? The doctor and Hudson never met again, for on his return to town he learnt that the doctor had had a stroke, from which he did not recover, but who can say what response was given to the testimony of faith so unexpectedly delivered in his surgery ?

During his stay at home Hudson could not keep his wonderful experiences to himself, and before he returned to London arrangements were made that he should not again have to stint himself to the same extent, for after his illness he was not fit to do it, and would need a more generous diet. He had indeed proved that nothing was too hard for his Father in heaven !





SKETCH MAP OF CHINA.

## CHAPTER VIII.

NEITHER SHALL HE WITHHOLD THE GOOD.

SOON after Hudson returned to London he was engaged as assistant to a surgeon living in St. Mary Axe, Mr. Thomas Brown by name. Here he lived as one of the family, which was better for him in every way than boarding himself, and he was still able to attend the hospital during the mornings, after which he worked for Mr. Brown till 9 p.m. and then was free to study on his own account.

It was a busy life, but he was now comparatively near the hospital, and his mind was at rest as to his livelihood, and the home life was no doubt good for him. One of the family told in after years how he would take Mr. Brown's youngest child, a baby boy of a year old, for a walk in his arms round Finsbury Circus every Sunday morning before service time. Mr. Brown did not believe in perambulators for town use, so the baby always went out in the carriage with his father on his rounds during the week. On Sunday, however, there was no such outing, and as he was too heavy for his nurse to carry, it had meant a day indoors,

until Hudson Taylor with his kindly good nature had supplied the deficiency.

At this time he frequently spent his Sundays at Tottenham at the house of a Christian lady, Miss Stacey by name. This house was a haven of refuge to others beside Hudson, as Miss Stacey seemed to have a way of finding out those who needed a retreat and rest from busy lives. In summer her garden with its beautiful cedar tree invited tired bodies and overwrought nerves to refresh themselves beneath its shade, and at other times the library was a comfortable and pleasant room in which to rest and meditate. And so it came about that the young medical student often found his way there at no cost to himself, as Miss Stacey always insisted on paying his fares; and here he came in contact with other Christians who helped to deepen his spiritual life and warm his heart.

During these months he had encouragement too of another kind. Among the patients he had to attend was an old man who was in a very serious condition and nearing the end of his days, though he did not realise it. Hudson had to dress his wound each day, and having heard that the man was violently opposed to Christians, and had already turned away with the utmost rudeness a scripture reader and the vicar of the district who had called to see him on separate occasions, he felt it would be a very difficult case. He had

already proved the value of prayer on many occasions, and before visiting the patient he prayed much for him. For the first two or three days he said nothing to arouse any ill-feeling in the old man, but took great pains with the dressing, to relieve his condition as far as possible. At last one day he summoned up courage to speak of his Master, as the patient seemed grateful for what was done for him, but the result was not encouraging, though he offered no violence, for he merely turned his back on Hudson and refused to answer.

This went on for some days without any apparent response to the daily appeal on behalf of his soul's welfare, till at last one day, after finishing the dressing, the young student could contain himself no longer, but bursting into tears he said, "My friend, whether you will hear or whether you will forbear, I *must* deliver my soul." He went on speaking very earnestly and begged to be allowed to pray with him.

To his great surprise and joy the old man replied, "If it will be a relief to you, do."

On his knees beside the bed Hudson poured out his soul to the Lord on behalf of the one who was so little prepared to end his days, and yet had not long to live. From this time forward the old man was always ready to listen to what was said to him, and before long he was rejoicing in Christ as his Saviour.

During the course of his studies at the



hospital Hudson had been troubled by the thought of the years that must go by before he could get his degree, and he could not help wondering whether the time would not be better spent in China learning the language among the people who needed him so much. He was learning dependence on God, and felt that he could not move without definite guidance, but he went so far as to tell the committee that he did not think he would be completing his studies, as he thought that in some way or another he would be leaving for China before long. There had been a state of rebellion in that country for some time past, which had hindered any progressive work there, but about this time news came that the disturbance appeared to be approaching an end, and it seemed that there might be greater opportunities for spreading the gospel than ever before. So the British and Foreign Bible Society decided to publish a million New Testaments to send to China, and much interest was felt at home in the possible developments in that country. The China Evangelisation Society, having funds enough in hand, proposed sending out a missionary to Shanghai, as at that time their only representative was in Canton, and they wrote asking Hudson Taylor if he would go if he had definitely decided not to continue his medical work in London.

Before the letter could be sent, Hudson himself walked into the office and was able

to listen to the proposal in person. After years of waiting it seemed to him hardly possible that the way was open at last, and that he was to be sent off as soon as his outfit could be obtained and a berth secured in a sailing ship. His dream had come true at last, doubts were dispelled, objections met, and there remained only final arrangements to carry through; and now the thought of all he was leaving behind him loomed very large, for though he had counted the cost, it is not easy to leave those we love.

In writing home to tell them he says, "I cannot write more, but hope to hear from you as soon as possible. Pray much for me. It is easy to talk of leaving all for Christ, but when it comes to the proof, it is only as we stand 'complete in him' we can go through with it. God be with you and bless you, my own dear, dear mother, and give you so to realise the preciousness of Jesus that you may wish for nothing but 'to know Him' . . . even in the fellowship of His sufferings."

After bidding farewell to his London friends, he went home to Barnsley for a short visit on his way to Liverpool, from which port he was to sail in a sailing ship—the *Dumfries* by name. His parents and several friends went to see him off, but the sailing was delayed some days, so only his mother was actually with him at the last. He was the only passenger, and his mother accompanied

him on board to arrange his little cabin and see the quarters he would occupy for the next five and a half months. They knelt in prayer together for the last time, but the parting came all too quickly, and the mother had to leave her son and step ashore.

"Dear mother," he said, "do not weep. It is but for a little while, and we shall meet again. Think of the glorious object I have in leaving you. It is not for wealth or fame, but to try to bring the poor Chinese to a knowledge of Jesus."

It was on the 19th of September, 1853, that the *Dumfries* set sail, and once they had left the Mersey it seemed as though all the powers of darkness were arrayed against them to prevent a successful voyage. For twelve days they were beaten backwards and forwards in the Channel, in imminent danger of being driven ashore.

"With heartfelt gratitude," he wrote on Monday, September 26th, "I record the mercy of God. He and He alone has snatched us from the jaws of death. May our spared lives be spent entirely in His service and for His glory."

During this stormy time one thing had troubled him greatly. His mother had earnestly wished him to take a swimming belt with him in case of accident, and he had done so at her request; but one night when it seemed as though the ship must be driven ashore, and there was no chance of

their lives being saved, he had been very much troubled as to whether it was not shewing distrust in God to make use of his belt. Finally at the height of the storm he gave his belt away, and then all at once his heart was filled with peace and comfort, for he felt then that he was just in God's hands. In after years he realised that it is right to use means for our safety, and that it need not hinder our confidence in our Father, as He frequently uses the things that are to our hand to work His own purposes.

After a tossing in the Bay of Biscay, the weather began to improve and they were glad to be able to dry their possessions, for everything was soaking from the heavy seas, and there had been no opportunity to dry anything.

Hudson had discovered that the ship's carpenter was a Christian and a kindred spirit, and now that things were more peaceful he asked permission from the captain to hold regular services for the crew. This was readily granted and the meetings were well attended during the whole voyage, while special interest was shewn by one or two. No doubt these meetings were used under God's hand to keep him in closer touch with his heavenly Father and to deepen his spiritual life. It is so easy to grow careless and slip back when away from helpful influences, and life on board ship does not tend to make things easy, yet he was much troubled

that there was no definite blessing among the men, though some seemed to be affected and would go to him for private prayer and talks.

The weeks and months slipped by somewhat monotonously, as they made no calls anywhere, though when they reached the Eastern Archipelago several times native canoes rowed out to them to trade in coconuts, shells, parrots and birds of paradise. It was with longing that the young missionary looked at these poor natives, who could speak no English, yet appeared gentle and intelligent. He longed to tell them of the gospel message and the Saviour who had died for them. As they passed island after island, some of them densely populated, it was with a burning heart that he thought of their darkness. He wrote, "Can it be that Christian men and women will stay comfortably at home and leave these souls to perish? Can it be that faith has no longer power to constrain to sacrifice for His sake who gave His life for the world's redemption?"

While they were still among these islands the ship again narrowly escaped disaster, as if Satan were making a final effort to hinder this invasion of his territory. Not being equipped with steam, the vessel was entirely at the mercy of the wind, and when off the coast of New Guinea they were becalmed, while a strong current was drifting them

towards some sunken reefs. It was Sunday morning, and during the service on deck the Captain looked anxious and several times went to look over the side. When the service was over Hudson Taylor joined him and was told that unless a breeze sprang up, which was not likely to happen till the evening, they would be on the rocks before the afternoon was over. The longboat was manned and an effort was made to turn the ship's head away from the shore, but without success; and there seemed no other hope.

Speaking to the captain, Hudson said, "There is one thing we have not done yet."

"What is that?" he asked.

"Four of us on board are Christians," he replied. "Let us each retire to our own cabin and in agreed prayer ask the Lord to give us immediately a breeze. He can as easily send it now as at sunset."

To this the captain agreed, and the four after prayer together each went to their own cabin.

For a short time Hudson prayed, and then felt so sure that his request was granted, that he rose from his knees and going up on deck spoke to the mate, who was a godless sort of man. He suggested to the mate that it would be well to set the sails ready for the breeze which he felt sure was coming, as they were by this time so near the rocks that there was no time to be lost. The sailor replied with an oath and a sneer, but sure

enough there was a gentle rustle in the topmost sail, and he was not slow to summon the men on deck. The captain hearing the noise left his cabin and found that the breeze had indeed come, and before long they were out of danger, and running before a good steady wind. Once more his prayer had been heard, and his confidence and faith deepened, while he learned yet again that he could go to his Father in all difficulties, counting on the promise, "No good will he withhold."

## CHAPTER IX.

### SMALL AND FEEBLE.

ON the arrival of the vessel at Shanghai, they were greeted with the news that the rebellion, far from being over, was still at its height, and the city itself was occupied by the rebels who were besieged by the Imperial army. The pilot who came on board brought them these tidings, for which Hudson was anxiously waiting, as there had, of course, been no news during the five and a half months since they left England. Detained in the river, first by fog, and then by adverse winds, it was not till March 1st, 1854, that Hudson Taylor at last stepped ashore on Chinese land, and set foot on what was to be the scene of his labours, with very few intervals, for the next fifty years. All alone, in a strange land, with not a friend to welcome him, he might well have been downcast, but he records that the words, "Lo, I am with you always," came to his mind and filled him with joy, while his heart went out in thankfulness to the One who had answered all his prayers and brought him safely to the land of his desire.

He had brought three letters of introduc-



tion from friends at home to those in Shanghai who, it was thought, would be able to help him with advice, and he immediately set about getting in touch with the one upon whose help and experience he counted most. This was not to be, however, for he was told that his friend had died of fever only a few weeks before, and another of his letters also proved useless, as the one to whom it was addressed had left for America.

With such news he might have been anxious as to his plans, but for the fact that he had learned in England that God often works in the most unlikely ways, and though he himself had not counted on the third letter being much use to him, yet it was evidently to be the one God would use on his behalf.

He found his way through the crowded, narrow streets with their shops on each side and swinging signs overhead. How strange it must have seemed to him to be here, actually within reach of those he had come to rescue from their darkness. The glamour of the East would have interested the ordinary sightseer, with its bright colours, strange sights, and unintelligible chatter on all sides, but what attracted him was the thought that these were men with living souls to be won for Christ. He was warmly welcomed by the missionaries of the London mission, when he at last reached their compound and explained his position. They told him that it

would be quite impossible for him to get a house or rooms anywhere in the city, as everywhere was full up, but one of their number, Dr. Lockhart, had a spare room in his house and offered to put him up till he could make other arrangements.

And now began a most trying time for him, which tested his faith to the utmost and through which he could not have gone without the most implicit confidence in his Father. He could not understand, but he *could* trust the One who had never failed him. After repeatedly trying to find some kind of accommodation, no matter how humble, for himself, he discovered that his friends had told him the truth, that there was nothing to be had, and the only way out of the difficulty would be to buy land and build a house for himself. This he was not in a position to do, as he had no authority from those at home to buy property, and moreover he had no money with which to do so. Also his idea had never been to settle down in one city, but rather to do as the Apostle Paul did, journey from city to city, from town to town and village to village, carrying the glad tidings as he went and leaving behind him Bibles, Testaments and tracts. He had been prepared to suffer hardship, to live poorly as one of the people, and had expected privation of one sort and another, but never had he expected the kind of trouble he was having to face.

He had settled down at Dr. Lockhart's comfortable home, where he was most kindly received and was allowed to pay his share of the expenses, as of course he wished to do. But this again caused him much anxiety, as food had risen to famine prices, and living was far more expensive than he had ever expected, and he had only been a very short while in Shanghai before he realised that he could not possibly live on his salary as he was going on. Could he have found rooms among the Chinese he would have lived as they did, and economised that way, but at Dr. Lockhart's that was impossible ; so there was nothing for it but to settle down and tell his heavenly Father all about the difficulty. He had already written to London explaining the position and asking for instructions as to how he should act, but he knew it would be months before he could get any reply.

In the meantime he had been advised to begin learning the Mandarin dialect, which is the one most widely used in China, and a teacher had been engaged who came to give him lessons daily. And now began days and weeks during which he did little else than study, and the monotony must have been very trying to one so eager to get amongst the people and tell them of Jesus. Yet, until he could get a grasp of the language, not one sentence could he say to help and comfort those who were daily wounded and dying around him as a result of the fighting.

With the sound of guns near them and the sight of wrecked houses with their homeless and often starving families in the streets, and the general uncertainty on all sides, there was much to depress a newly arrived missionary; while the scenes of bloodshed and horror that were frequently witnessed could not but leave their mark on one so sensitive, with such keen sympathy for others. He would gladly have left the city and found a little place for himself in one of the surrounding villages, where he could have lived among the people and learned their ways at first hand; but the country was in such a state that no foreigner was safe outside the settlement, and so the only thing to do was to stay where he was, study as hard as he could, and pray for the way to be opened.

In writing of all the misery around him he says, "Satan came in as a flood; but there was One who lifted up a standard against him. Jesus *is* here, and though unknown to the majority and uncared for by many who might know Him, He is present and precious to His own." It was this thought that kept him from being utterly cast down, and sent him constantly to the throne of grace to get help in time of need.

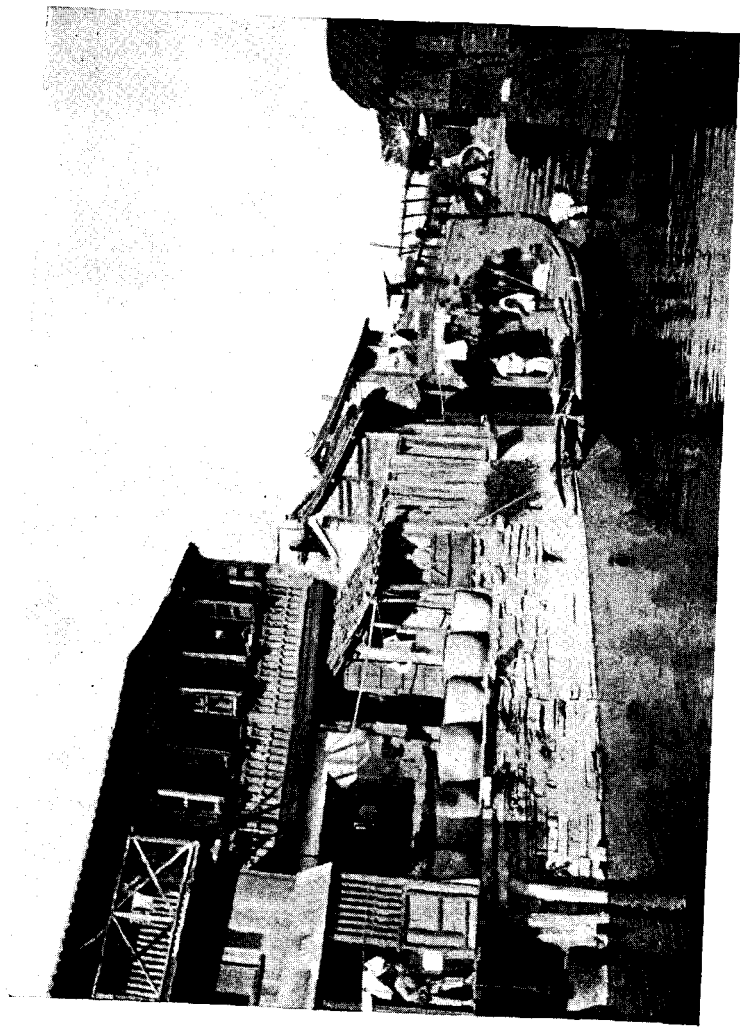
The letters from home and his loved ones were the greatest comfort at this time of loneliness and inactivity, but there were months when these were unaccountably de-

layed, although they were sent off regularly by each mail ; and then it was hard to bear the disappointment. He speaks of going one day to the office on the arrival of the mail steamer, and bringing home letters for everyone in the L.M.S. compound but himself ! To vary the monotony he took up his old interest in nature study, and began collecting butterflies, insects and wild flowers. Here his early knowledge and training stood him in good stead, and after studying for hours with his eyes glued to a book it was a welcome change to get out among the beauties of nature, and he writes of magnificent butterflies he had secured almost as big as birds ; and speaks of many familiar wild flowers, such as violets, forget-me-nots, buttercups, clover, dandelions, etc., besides many unknown ones.

Month after month went by and still no instructions arrived from London as to building, and he began to be painfully aware that unless he were able to take some action before long he might wear out his welcome.

When his anxiety was at its height and the heat of July almost unbearable to one unaccustomed to it, he was still further perplexed by the news that the society to which he was attached were sending out another missionary to join him—Dr. Parker, with his wife and three children. Under ordinary circumstances this would have been a great





A VILLAGE ON A CANAL IN CHINA.

joy to him, as he longed for one to whom he could open all his heart and discuss the difficulties with which he was faced, but now the thought appalled him, for with no place of his own, how could he provide for a man with a family ?

Dr. Lockhart said, "Why do you not start building ?" yet how could he explain that he had not the necessary money and that he could not do such a thing without instructions ? His friends thought him lacking in forethought and consideration for those who would be arriving before many months were over, but they had no idea of the position.

To his sister he wrote, "I have been puzzling my brains again about a house, etc., but to no effect. So I have made it a matter of prayer, and have given it entirely into the Lord's hands, and now I feel quite at peace about it. He will provide and be my Guide in this and every other perplexing step." Well it was for him that he had learned this habit of prayer and confidence in God while still in England, for now he had no one else to turn to.

The months slipped away and winter had come when the unexpected happened—a vacant house in the compound, owing to the death of one of the missionary's wives—half of which Hudson was able to secure in readiness for the arrival of the Parkers. So yet again God had moved for him just in



time, for he had barely transferred his possessions before news came that his new colleagues had arrived.

Dr. and Mrs. Parker had come prepared for hardships, and truly those first few weeks must have been as bad as anything they expected. Hudson Taylor had had neither time nor money to furnish the house in English fashion, and on their arrival the only furniture was a Chinese bed, and a few tables and chairs, while the floors were bare, the windows uncurtained, and worst than all in the bitter cold of November, no stoves or supply of fuel.

Dr. Parker and his family were well supplied with clothes for the tropics but had nothing warm, and needed a new outfit of winter things, beside warm bedding. Yet where *was* the money to come from? Hudson's own clothes were the ones he had brought with him from England and were by now so shabby that he was almost ashamed to mix with Europeans, yet he had no money for more, indeed after paying the rent for the house he had only two or three dollars in hand. He had hoped that Dr. Parker would be the bearer of instructions and fresh supplies in answer to his repeated letters; but instead of that Dr. Parker was expecting to find that all arrangements had been made for him by Hudson. He had been told that a letter of credit would be sent and reach Shanghai ahead of him, yet it had

not arrived and he had only a few dollars in hand himself.

In this extremity they went to the agent, who should have received the letter of credit, and laid their case before him, and he with genuine kindness advanced them money enough to keep them until the belated letter of credit arrived some months later.

What a winter that must have been! With only three rooms to live in, and three little children to care for, and callers to entertain, how could a busy mother keep the little ones quiet while the two men sat each with his "pundit" at study? No wonder that Hudson Taylor in his letters asks for special prayers on his behalf, for he felt so nervous and irritable! He could by now make himself understood in Chinese to a certain extent, and before the coming of the Parkers, had spent some time in the city among the natives, teaching a few children he had gathered together, with the help of a native Christian, and prescribing for patients who came to the dispensary. It was just a beginning amongst the people, but had to be abandoned, as the house was under such constant fire that it was no longer safe.

## CHAPTER X.

NONE SHALL MAKE HIM AFRAID.

**A**T intervals during all this time journeys had been taken by river to the near-by villages and towns by several of the missionaries in the compound. There was considerable risk, but so far they had been preserved, and now Hudson Taylor was invited to accompany Mr. Edkins on a week's trip up the river. Mr. Edkins had secured a native house-boat which was both commodious and clean. It had one tall mast and sail, and a cabin that gave shelter from rain and wind. Into this they packed their belongings, clothes and bedding, drugs and books for distributing, as well as provisions, a stove and cooking utensils. It was quite a new experience for Hudson and was just what he had been longing for ever since he reached China. It was the inland cities that were laid upon his heart, cities where the gospel had never been proclaimed, and where no white man had visited.

Their first night on the water was one to be long remembered. The river was dotted with houseboats similar to their own, each

with its family, containing sometimes grandparents, parents and children; for these river folk spend all their lives on the water, rarely going on shore; and all their belongings are afloat with them. At night they anchor close together for safety against marauders, while the night watchman keeps guard, sounding his gong from time to time, perhaps as a warning that he is awake. As many of these river folk as could do so crowded into the little cabin for evening prayer and a talk. To them the old, old story was something new and strange, but may there not have been some to whom it came as light out of darkness as they listened in the dim light of the cabin?

City after city they visited, distributing books and Testaments, speaking where there was an opportunity and then returning to their boat on the river, where they were frequently visited by those who wished to know more about this new way, and others who wanted medical help. In one city they approached a Buddhist monastery, and there in the courtyard their opportunity came to speak to a large crowd gathered in front of the temple. When they had finished and had distributed books to those who could read, one of the priests called to them and invited them to enter and rest, explaining that they must see the "holy man" before leaving. It was Hudson Taylor's first experience of a "holy man," of whom there are many so

called in China. Built into the wall of the monastery, with barely room to move and only a small hole in the wall through which a hand can be passed with food, these poor devotees pass year after year without comfort or companionship or light, so that they may acquire merit, and perhaps in the end be acceptable to their God. Thank God, Mr. Edkins was able to speak in a dialect that the poor man understood, and he told him of a God of love who sent His Son to die and to wash away our sins in His own precious blood. Did the good news preached under such strange circumstances bring peace and healing to that comfortless cell? We cannot tell, but maybe the day will come when we shall meet that poor recluse in a better land as the result of the earnest prayers that were offered up on his behalf.

After a week away they found themselves at home once more, but now that he had seen how such work could be done, Hudson Taylor determined to go on his own account; for though there might be danger, yet he counted on the protection of the One who had called him to China, and who he believed had opened the way to carrying the gospel up the river. He was able to buy a native boat very cheaply, and accompanied by a servant and well supplied with books he set off to explore a tributary stream to the south of Shanghai, which was very little frequented by foreigners. The district was

one with a bad name, for smugglers abounded, and on this account it was avoided by respectable traders. But if the district was bad it was clear that the gospel was needed all the more, so though it was December and very cold, so that at times they had to break the ice round the boat in the morning and make way for it by using a pole in front to make a channel, he was nothing daunted.

If he ever felt lonely he was reminded of the One who was with him and whose presence seemed as real a protection as the pillar of fire that went before the Israelites by night to guide them in their wanderings. His foreign appearance and dress caused much excitement and interest, and his books were eagerly accepted, for it was something new to have books *given* away—and such beautiful books too! Wherever he had the opportunity he would address the crowds that followed him, making the most of his somewhat scanty and far from fluent Chinese, for he felt that if he did not tell them the good news they might never hear it; and though he was often roughly jostled, yet no actual violence was offered him.

From hamlet to hamlet he and his servant went, speaking to all who would listen, distributing books to those who could read, and prescribing medicines for the sick. Several times he was warned by the better-class Chinese that he was running a great risk in travelling thus alone and unprotected,

but he explained that he had no fear, for he was not alone, and his God, who was the great Creator of all things, would care for him.

Very real was his faith and trust in his heavenly Father, so that when asked one day if he would go some distance inland to visit a dying woman he readily agreed, and set off alone with the men, who had brought a chair with them in which to carry him. Mile after mile they went through the bitter cold until at last they came to a house, where he found the poor woman very ill with dropsy. He did what he could, but it was impossible to do much for her relief in such surroundings, so he tried to persuade her husband to take her to Shanghai, where she could get proper treatment. But if he could not do much for her suffering body, he could tell of the Saviour who had shed His blood and was even then waiting to bless her.

The whole countryside turned out to see such an extraordinary sight as a foreigner, and he was able to tell them also for the first time of the redeeming love of Jesus. The grateful husband brought a live fowl tied by the legs to Hudson Taylor, apologising that he could not give him more for his trouble, and the man's surprise was great when the fowl was politely returned to him with the assurance that all that had been done was free and needed no payment.

While on this journey he was able to buy food and fuel to take back, much more

cheaply than in the city of Shanghai, and this with Mrs. Parker's careful housekeeping kept their expenses as low as possible, though the cost of living was still very high and it was not easy to make both ends meet.

At last, in February, 1855, the Imperial troops broke their way into the city, and the siege was at an end. The foreign settlement was left in peace, but terrible scenes of bloodshed and destruction took place in the native city, rebels and citizens alike being slaughtered in the most wholesale and barbarous manner. In writing home in March Hudson Taylor says, "Shanghai is now in peace, but it is like the peace of death. Two thousand people at the very least have perished, and the tortures some of the victims have undergone cannot have been exceeded by the worst barbarities of the Inquisition. The city is little more than a mass of ruins, and many of the wretched objects who have survived are piteous to behold." Terrible as it must have been to be so near such suffering and yet have no power to help, the missionaries could not but rejoice that peace was restored, and on all sides there was the expectation that there would be more freedom in moving into the interior and better opportunities of spreading the glad tidings.

In April Hudson Taylor again set out, this time accompanied by an experienced missionary friend, Mr. Burdon. They in-



tended to make a longer journey and to travel farther up the Yangtze than before, so they took two boats and a couple of native teachers with them. Day after day they followed their usual plan of tending the sick, distributing books and preaching the word, after which they would have private conversation with any specially interested who followed them to their boats, and then move on to the next place.

At one place the people fled from them in terror, and could not be persuaded to come near until it had been explained that there was a foreign doctor who could cure their sick. At other places the crowds gathered and it was with difficulty they could make themselves heard, but as they went from town to town and saw the extent of the populous district, of which they were only touching the fringe, they longed for the way to open for them to penetrate the vast interior of China, which had never yet heard the gospel message.

At last they determined to turn aside to visit the great city of Tung-chow, which lay in a beautiful fertile plain about seven miles from the river. They left the native teachers in charge of the two boats, with instructions that if the missionaries did not return that night they were to make what inquiries they could and then, leaving one boat behind in case they should after all appear, return to Shanghai with what speed they could and

report their fate. The state of the roads made it quite impossible to walk, so they hired two native wheelbarrows, and with their books tied up in two bundles and accompanied by a servant they set out.

Before long their servant, thoroughly frightened by the reports of the native soldiers at large in the district, begged to be allowed to return to the boats. This, of course, was agreed to, and they proceeded once more, in spite of the rain and mud and repeated warnings that it was not safe to go on. So firmly was it in their minds that they had been directed by God to go to this city that they took all the hindrances and opposition as merely an attempt of Satan to prevent the spread of the glad tidings and to hinder their invasion of his territory. Wherever possible they distributed books as they proceeded and encouraged one another in their discomfort with texts and comforting hymns.

As they approached the gate, the text came into Hudson Taylor's mind, "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word." It was just the word for the moment, and their hearts echoed it. Leaving their barrow-men to await their return, they quietly entered the city unhindered, but before long a party of soldiers surrounded them and roughly seized them and dragged them along at such a pace that it was with difficulty they could keep up,

burdened as they were with books. They demanded to be taken to the chief magistrate so that they might lay before him their case, but the soldiers hurried them along disputing among each other by the way as to what they should do with them. The more savage ones wanted to kill their prisoners at once, while the others suggested taking them to the Ya-men, which is the local magistrate's court; but in spite of this they were kept in peace, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name, and reminding one another that the worst that could happen would only mean, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

Hudson then thought of his Chinese visiting card, which in that country is a large piece of red paper with the name on it. This he shewed to his captors, and the sight of it made them slightly more respectful, and at last, after what seemed an endless walk, they arrived utterly exhausted at a mandarin's house, where they were kept waiting outside while their books were taken in for examination. A large crowd gathered, and though hardly able to stand, Mr. Burdon spoke to them of Jesus Christ and their need of a Saviour; rejoicing that in spite of the enemy's attack they should have this opportunity of preaching.

At length chairs were brought, as they refused to walk any further, and they were carried through the streets, thankful for the

opportunity to rest, to the chief mandarin of the city. Their cards were sent in again, and before long the mandarin himself came out, having been in Shanghai formerly and knowing the importance of treating foreigners with politeness. He greeted them respectfully and invited them into a private room, where they were followed by a number of lesser officials. Mr. Taylor presented the mandarin with a New Testament, and explaining their object in visiting the city asked for permission to distribute their books and see something of the place before leaving.

The mandarin listened politely while Hudson Taylor spoke to him of the teaching in the books they carried, and after a long conversation he granted their request, and ordered refreshments to be brought, which were more than welcome after all they had gone through. Finally he took a very courteous leave of the foreigners and sent runners ahead to clear the way for the progress of their chairs and prevent further trouble.

Their books were distributed, and they were then conducted back to the gate by which they had entered, the runners going in front using their pigtailed whips to clear a passage through the crowds. Having found their barrows and paid off the chairmen, they returned to their boats in safety, their hearts filled with thankfulness for the protecting care of their heavenly Father.

They had endured hardships as good sol-

diers, and proved that it was possible to carry the gospel to hitherto unreached districts. It might be difficult, it *would* be dangerous, but with the command to sow beside all waters, how could they ignore the needs of the vast unknown interior ?

## CHAPTER XI.

NEVERTHELESS, AT THY WORD.

WHILE several similar journeys were undertaken in one direction or another, either by Hudson Taylor alone, or else accompanied by Mr. Burdon or Dr. Parker, the position in Shanghai was becoming more and more difficult. The little house that had seemed so cramped during the winter was almost intolerable in the heat of the summer months, yet they had nowhere else to go. After months of delay they had eventually been told by the committee in London that they would not be responsible for any building in Shanghai, as they wished their missionaries to go inland. They gave permission for rooms to be rented in the native part of the city as a dispensary, but had no suggestion to make of any kind as to where Dr. Parker and his family were to live. The situation was becoming acute, as more L.M.S. missionaries were on their way out from England, and soon even the three rooms which were so inadequate would be wanted for the newcomers, and they would have nowhere to go. Repeated efforts to find other accommodation at a reasonable

figure ended in failure, and they were much cast on the Lord to shew them what they should do.

For Dr. Parker, with his qualifications and a family to provide for, it must have been a sore temptation to start a private practice, for very soon he would have been earning a good income. He had asked the committee to furnish money to build a hospital in Shanghai, which he felt sure he could support as a missionary undertaking by working a private practice at the same time. As, however, they were not to build, and he would not for a minute consider giving up the work for which he had come to China, it was evident that both he and Hudson must wait until the Lord made their path clear.

During one of their journeys they had gone as far south as Ning-po, where there were already missionaries settled. The district was well worked, but they had no hospital where the sick could be tended, as it was often impossible to do so in their own homes, and they felt the need of one keenly. The missionaries were much attracted to Dr. Parker, and after he and Mr. Taylor had returned to Shanghai they discussed the feasibility of opening a hospital and asking the former to take charge of it. So just when the position seemed most critical the invitation came to the doctor to go and settle in Ning-po, and undertake the very kind of

work he had come to China to do. He felt God's hand was directly leading him that way, and thankfully accepted the offer.

It was a great relief to know that Dr. Parker and his family were provided for, but it meant Hudson Taylor losing his friend and colleague, and still he was uncertain what he ought to do himself. He had had thoughts for some months past of discarding his European clothes and adopting the Chinese style of dress, so that he could more easily mix with the people in the country places where a foreigner was a rarity and even caused alarm at times. He felt that he ought to have a base in Shanghai, from which to work, though he intended to spend most of his time journeying inland, but it seemed impossible to hear of anything. Had the Lord forgotten him? Surely not, though it might have seemed like it to the perplexed young missionary.

He had promised to go with the Parkers to Ning-po to help them on the journey, and the day before leaving he had made his decision and purchased a Chinese outfit, intending to search for a home inland, as every door seemed closed in Shanghai. It seemed to him that he was being directed towards living in closer contact with the people, and this could only be if he adopted their style of dress, their food, and their way of living. How often the Lord brings us to the point of being prepared to submit to His



will, and then He opens the door. It was so in this case, for quite unsought, news was brought to him of a small new two-storied house in the native city that was nearly completed, which he could have at a reasonable rent. Again he felt, as often before, that the Lord had come in for him just in time, and had provided the very house he needed but had not expected to get.

That night, feeling it was the Lord's leading, he had his head shaved Chinese fashion and put on Chinese dress, which from this time forward he always wore, in spite of much criticism from his friends, who strongly disapproved of his plan. Writing to his sister Amelia, he describes his dress and makes light of the discomfort which he must have felt at first at wearing such unaccustomed garments. He says, "When you proceed to your toilet, you no longer wonder that many Chinese in the employ of Europeans wear foreign shoes and stockings as soon as they can get them. For native socks are made of calico and of course are not elastic . . . and average toes decidedly object to being squeezed out of shape, nor do one's heels appreciate their low position in perfectly flat-soled shoes. Next come the breeches—but, oh, what unheard of garments! Mine are two feet too wide for me round the waist, which amplitude is laid in a fold in front, and kept in place by a strong girdle. The legs are short, not coming much

below the knee, and wide in proportion with the waist measurement. Tucked into the long white socks they have a bloomer-like fulness capable, as Dr. Parker remarked, of storing a fortnight's provisions! No shirt is worn. But a white, washing-jacket with sleeves as wide as those that ladies affected some years ago, supplies its place. And over all goes a heavy silk gown of some rich or delicate colour, with sleeves equally wide and reaching twelve or fifteen inches beyond the tips of one's fingers, folded back of course when the hands are in use. Unfortunately no cap or hat is used at this season of the year, except on state occasions, which is trying, as the sun is awfully hot."

Such was the dress of a "Teacher," or man of the scholarly class, and if there were discomforts at first, he gladly put up with them to feel he was nearer the people he so longed to help.

He adds, "Dressed in this way one is not so much respected at first sight as one might be in foreign clothing. But a little medical work soon puts that all right, and it is evidently to be one's chief help for the interior. Women and children, it seems to me, manifest more readiness to come for medical aid now than they did before . . . and in this way, too, I think the native costume will be of service."

It was a wrench when he finally bid good-bye to Dr. Parker and took leave of the little

house where they had lived happily, in spite of discomforts, and the L.M.S. compound where he had made many friends during the last eighteen months. But what he felt most keenly was the strong disapproval of his friends at the step he had taken. At that time it was an unheard of thing for a missionary to "go native," and he felt at once that it had put a very tangible barrier between himself and the European community. Yet he felt it was the Lord's leading, and he was prepared to suffer more than this if by so doing he could be more available to the Chinese ; so he held quietly on his way and took possession of his new house and he found, what many another has found in a trying pathway, that the path of obedience is a pathway of joy.

To his mother he wrote, "The future is a ravelled maze, but my path has always been made plain just one step at a time. I must wait on God and trust in Him, and all will be well. I think I do love Him more than ever, and long increasingly to serve Him as He directs. I have had some wonderful seasons of soul-refreshing lately, unworthy of them as I have been."

Very soon he had a fresh and wonderful cause for joy, for his servant, Kuei-hua, who had served him faithfully and been with him on his travels, now confessed Christ and asked to be baptised. Could any joy be like this, and was it not worth any sacrifice ?

"When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, there is lifting up."

In a letter he wrote, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. Oh, yes! God is not straitened. If we expect much from Him, He surely will not disappoint us."

He was now able to open a dispensary, and patients who came for advice would stay to listen to the doctor, attracted by the happiness that radiated from him. He also had started a boys' school, so his time was very fully occupied, and but for the call of the interior that always filled his heart and imagination, he might have settled down to work in the city of Shanghai. As it was, as soon as he was able he set out on a fresh journey leaving a native teacher in charge, intending to visit the island of Tsung-ming, where he had called once before with Mr. Burdon, and had found the people very friendly and eager to listen. Tsung-ming is a large island in the estuary of the Yangtze river, with a population of over a million people, and when they had visited it previously in April there were large tracts of land with peach trees in full bloom—a beautiful sight and one to be remembered.

This time Mr. Taylor's reception was even more friendly, for was he not just like one of themselves, both in his clothes and his manner of life? They begged him to stop amongst them and teach them, and were ready to find him accommodation, if only he

would stay. Much attracted to these simple, warm-hearted people, he explained that he could not sleep on the ground-floor on account of the damp and risk of fever, and most of the houses were only one storey. However, they were not to be put off, and said, "Let him live in the temple if no other upper room can be found."

Stored away in the upper rooms of the temple were the dusty remains of idols. They were old and disused and no longer worshipped, but the priests were afraid to remove them; still there could be no objection to the young missionary having the room if he did not mind the idols being left in their places. He on his side said that it was not a question of his own feelings in the matter, but how could he ask his God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, to share a room with idols that had been made by *man*, and whose only power, if they possessed any, was by the working of evil spirits? This was reasonable, and even the priests could see the difficulty, but so great was the anxiety of the people to keep the young teacher among them that they succeeded in obtaining a two-storied house for him, which could be rented cheaply if he so wished.

A home among the people had long been his dream, and here was one almost forced on him! True it was very dirty and needed furnishing, but his two Chinese helpers set to with a will, whitewashing and cleaning,

while Mr. Taylor received visitors in all ranks of life. Some came as patients, others paid ceremonial calls, and still more came just out of curiosity, but none went away without hearing something of the gospel message and both he and his helpers had a busy time.

By the end of a week the verdict of the neighbourhood had gone forth. Decidedly these strangers who had come amongst them wished to do good and help others, and were not merely pleasure-seekers. The medicines opened many a door, and one and another in the town seemed really interested in the gospel message, and came daily to the meetings, and so the work grew.

At the end of three weeks their supplies ran short, as Mr. Taylor had not intended being away so long, and he decided to leave one of his native helpers, Ts'ien by name, to carry on the work while he went back for more money and medicines to Shanghai.

He was only away a week, but much can happen even in that short space of time. Taking advantage of his absence, the Chinese druggists of the town, who were losing many of their clients owing to the remarkable efficacy of the foreign doctor's medicines, stirred up trouble. Many cures had been worked on patients who has been suffering from chronic complaints, and who had been highly profitable to the druggist community until the foreign doctor came, and if this

went on their business would soon be spoilt. So Chinese fashion they sent twelve dollars to the mandarin, asking him to expel the foreigner.

On his return, Mr. Taylor received messengers who pointed out to him the advisability of him on his part sending a bribe, so that he might be allowed to remain, but great was their disappointment at not being able to get anything out of him at all. However, he was not in any way molested and hoping that the matter would blow over he settled down to work again, seeing patients one day and visiting the surrounding villages the next.

Then one morning, while they were at breakfast, the mandarin of Tsung-ming city passed by with all his train, and it was rumoured that he had come to examine into the matter, and also to deal with some pirates in the neighbourhood. The report was circulated that the landlord who had rented the house to Mr. Taylor, and also the two native helpers, were to be arrested and beaten unless their replies were satisfactory. After morning worship, which they held as usual, offering up very special prayers for their protection, they received patients and went through the daily routine without any interference, and to their great joy the mandarin took his departure next day without taking any action with regard to *them* at all.

Filled with thankfulness at the answer to

their prayers, and that they were still able to carry on the work which was shewing results, they were encouraged to continue. There were two men now who openly confessed Christ as their Saviour—one of them a blacksmith, Chang by name. He could not read, but he came every day to the meetings and now shut his shop on Sundays. The other was Sung, an assistant in a grocery store, who could read a little, and he also received much help from the daily meetings, and both being men of good standing their testimony carried weight with those around. The two native helpers were also growing in grace and in knowledge. Both having been converted themselves, they longed to speak of their new found joy to their countrymen and learn more of the glad tidings themselves.

In spite of the threatened trouble, it was a time of great joy to Hudson Taylor, as being the first place where he had gained a footing inland and had seen the results of his labours; but just when the work seemed to be prospering most, orders came from the most unexpected quarter that it must cease.

Great was his disappointment to receive a letter from the British Consul stating that by treaty British subjects only had the right of settling in the five treaty ports, and that he must immediately give up possession of his house and return to Shanghai. In vain he pleaded that Roman Catholic priests were allowed to settle inland, and that there was



a clause in the treaty giving equal rights to Protestant missionaries. He was told he might apply to a higher authority if he wished, and there the matter ended. How hard it was to leave these people he was growing to love, his children in the faith, Chang and Sung, and the work that seemed so promising ! How much easier it is to trust God for ourselves than to leave entirely in His hands those who are dear to us. Many times Mr. Taylor had trusted the Lord blindly on his own account, but for these converts of less than six weeks' standing he felt he must make a struggle. Sir John Bowring, to whom he must appeal, was on his way out from England, and in the meantime there was nothing for it but to obey orders and leave Tsung-ming.

Very touching was the last evening he spent with those who had only such a short time before left their idols to serve the true and living God. "My heart will be truly sorrowful when I can no longer join you in the daily meeting," were the words of Chang the blacksmith ; while Sung added, "I know but very little, and when I read I by no means understand all the characters. My heart is grieved because you have to leave us ; but I do thank God He ever sent you to this place. My sins, once so heavy, are all laid on Jesus, and He daily gives me joy and peace."

The Lord did not forget his sorrowing servant, and just at the time when he needed

advice and help from one of riper experience, he was brought in contact with William Burns, who was just at that time doing much the same kind of evangelical work on the Yangtze River as Hudson Taylor himself. They were drawn to each other from the first, having much in common, both in whole-hearted devotedness to the Lord and in a burning zeal in spreading the gospel among the hitherto untaught Chinese.

What it must have meant to this young man of only twenty-three to be able to unburden his heart and tell of his grief at having to leave Tsung-ming! A trouble shared is wonderfully eased, and it was not only sympathy that Mr. Burns was able to give him, but words of brotherly wisdom. He had been many years on the road, and had had much experience of God's wonderful ways of working, and after a talk with him and prayer over the situation, Hudson Taylor did not feel nearly so sure about appealing to Sir John Bowring. He began to see that had it been God's mind He could so easily have arranged things for his servant to stay on the island. He had opened the door unexpectedly, blessed the word in a wonderful way, and then had allowed the door to be closed. There are no second causes in Christianity, and it must have been of His ordering. Would then His servant wish to strive to re-open that door apart from his Lord? Would he wish to carry on the work there when

perhaps the Lord was saying, "That is My work, I will prosper it, I have other work for you to do elsewhere" ? Unthinkable. And so comfort came to him, and a deeper knowledge of his Master's ways, and a fresh dependence on Him for guidance in all his movements.

The friendship that had begun so happily was destined to be a very helpful one. Both men were working alone at that time with much the same aim in view, so they decided to join forces. Each had his own boat and native helpers, but travelling the same way they were able to act either together or independently, as occasion demanded; and to the younger man it was an inspiration to be with one who breathed the Spirit of Christ, as did William Burns.

## CHAPTER XII.

### NOT BY MIGHT.

**I**T was December of 1855 when William Burns and Hudson Taylor left Shanghai with the town of Nan-zin as their objective. They intended to make this their centre and work the district all round. Mr. Burns' usual plan was to go as unobtrusively as possible to the quieter suburbs of the town distributing books and speaking whenever chance offered to any who should gather round them. After spending several days in this way, people were beginning to get used to the appearance of the foreigners, so that when they appeared in the busy centre of the town later there was not the same risk of excitable crowds rushing together, making it impossible for preaching to be carried on, and in some cases causing real danger of damage to neighbouring shops in the general excitement.

Mr. Burns was still in European clothes, though he usually concealed them as far as possible by means of a Chinese cloak thrown over the top. He could not help noticing that his young companion in native dress usually

had a more attentive and better class audience than he himself. Students of the scholarly class would listen to him, while frequently it was the more rowdy lower classes that collected round the older man, partly out of curiosity to see the foreigner's dress perhaps. Then, too, it sometimes happened that Hudson Taylor would be invited inside a house for further conversation, while Mr. Burns was requested to wait outside; so he came to realise that if one wished to get near the people in the more out of the way places, one must become, as far as possible, one of them. Having made this discovery, he lost no time in following Mr. Taylor's example, adopting a Chinese costume, and never regretted the step; indeed, he never again resumed European dress while in China.

They were much encouraged by their visit to Nan-zin, where they spoke frequently in the open and also in schools and tea-shops, or wherever opportunity offered.

In his journal Mr. Taylor gives an interesting picture of one such visit to a tea-shop on the evening of December 28th. "I wish I could picture the scene. Imagine a large, dimly lighted room, on a level with the ground, filled with square tables and narrow forms, so arranged that eight persons might be seated at each table. . . . Scattered about the room a number of working men were drinking tea and smoking long bamboo

pipes with brass heads, while a boy with a copper kettle went to and fro from the fire-place with boiling water. Hardly had we entered before Mr. Burns's lantern began to attract attention. It was an ordinary lantern such as one often sees in England, with glass on three sides and a plated mirror to reflect the light, but quite a curiosity here. Around us soon gathered a group of questioners, some of whom were educated, and the rest workmen of more or less intelligence. . . . Before long the conversation became interesting. We did not have to make our way, so to speak, for the gospel, it was drawn from us by their own questions. One asked, 'Are all the idols false?' 'If Jesus is in heaven how can we worship Him here?' was a very natural question; while one who had not understood much said earnestly, 'Take me to see God and Jesus, and then I can believe on them.' The boy, too, as he went about filling the cups, would put his kettle down upon the table, and folding his arms over it listen to what was being said. . . . One man who has followed us from place to place insisted on paying for our tea, a sum equal nearly to a penny. . . . We were enabled to speak plainly on many topics, and best of all our Master was with us."

He also tells of an invitation they received on their way home one evening from a tea-shop meeting. One who had been present asked if they would go home with him and

tell his family all that he had been hearing. Only too glad of such an opportunity, they willingly went with him, for it was not often that they were invited into a private house.

The family consisted of an intelligent boy of fourteen, a young man of about twenty and a little girl of ten. The mother and older daughters, together with a woman servant kept in the background and listened from the shadows of the dimly lit room. Hudson Taylor in speaking to the little gathering did not forget those half-concealed listeners, and spoke of his own mother and sisters, and how they had prayed for his conversion until they received the answer.

He could not help longing for the time, which he foresaw by faith, when there would be praying mothers and sisters in China. What to him was an earnest expectation is in our day a reality. God delights to answer such longings in His people, and who can tell but God Himself how far-reaching one such prayerful desire may be !

It was a bitterly cold December, but the two missionaries were proving yet another advantage of being in Chinese dress. Hudson Taylor writes that instead of being half-frozen, as he had been the winter before, he was now warm and comfortable, thanks to the thickly wadded and fur-lined clothes that defied wind and frost.

He describes in a letter to one of his sisters

how he was housed in his boat. "Indeed, we have many mercies to be thankful for. A good boat costing about two shillings a day gives me a nice little room to myself, one in front for my servant to sleep in, used in the daytime for receiving guests, and a cabin behind for my teachers, as well as a place for cooking, storing books, etc. My tiny room has an oyster-shell window that gives light, while it prevents people from peeping in . . . a table at which I write and take meals . . . a locker on which my bed is spread at night . . . and a seat round the remaining space, so that two visitors or even three can be accommodated.

"For family worship we open the doors in front and behind my cabin, and then the boat-people, teachers, servant and Mr. Burns can all join in the service. . . . How very differently was our Master lodged! 'Nowhere to lay his head.' And this for my sins, amazing thought! . . . Then I am no longer my own. Bought with His precious blood. . . . Oh, may I be enabled to glorify Him with my whole spirit, soul and body, which are His!"

In the tiny cabin many an interesting conversation was held with inquirers who came to ask questions and to hear more of the new religion. One day Mr. Taylor was explaining to some visitors the folly of worshipping idols, which were the work of men's hands and could not do anything of themselves,



when he was interrupted by one of his guests, who felt that this was going altogether too far.

"But there are some good idols as well as many that are useless," he said.

On being asked where they were, he pointed to a temple near at hand and said, "In there," for many years ago two strangers had come to the town, so the story ran, bringing a boat load of rice to sell for their masters. It was a time of great distress owing to famine, and such was the deep concern of the men for the starving crowds around them that instead of selling their rice, they gave it away to the poorest of the people. Then they were ashamed to go back because they had no money to take to their masters, so they threw themselves into the river and were drowned. The people, grateful for the food, said they must be gods and made idols to represent them, which they set up in the temple, and ever after worshipped."

Such was the story, and the speaker felt sure one could not be wrong in worshipping *such* gods.

What an opportunity it was for the young missionary to compare these men, who had stolen their masters' property to give away, and then had sinned in taking their own lives, with the holy, spotless Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

Before they left this place, they were much encouraged by overhearing one man ask

another, "What do you think of it all? Do you believe this doctrine of Jesus?"

"Believe," was the reply, "I certainly believe."

One such confession was worth weeks of toil, and it brought joy and thankfulness to the hearts of those who heard it.

They next visited a town of very ill-repute, Wu-tien by name, which was the haunt of salt-smugglers and other disreputable characters. It was not a place one would choose to go to for pleasure, but the command "to every creature" certainly included even such a town as this, so they could not pass it by. For the first few days all went well, and they were able to distribute books and speak to audiences that were unusually attentive; but this invasion of the enemy's territory was not to be allowed without opposition, and as happened so many hundreds of years before in Thessalonica when a work of God was started, "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" stirred up trouble. A party of men who were quite uneducated came demanding books, and when they were refused, as the missionaries had always gone on the plan of only giving to those who could read, an attack was made on the boats and one of the cabins battered in.

Through mercy no one was injured, and they were able to join in a prayer of thanksgiving for their Father's preserving power. Nothing daunted, they continued their

preaching in the town, and it was evident by the quiet behaviour of the listeners that they had no sympathy with the evil-doers.

Two days later, after the missionaries had gone into the town for the evening preaching in a tea-shop, a party of desperate characters assembled near the boats, and sent one of their number with a message to Sung, who was in charge, that unless money and opium were given them the boats should both be burned that night. Greatly frightened, but unable to do anything, as he had neither money nor opium, Sung sent a messenger after the missionaries to warn them of the trouble.

While awaiting events the ruffians went into a tea-shop near by, and while there darkness fell. But God works by ways that we know not. First, it was an unusually dark night, so that the boatmen were able to quietly move the boats away, one in one direction, and the other in the other direction. Secondly, Mr. Burns and Mr. Tylor had changed their plans and gone to another tea-shop nearer at hand, and it proved to be unusually empty, also those who were there shewed little or no interest in the conversation, so they left much earlier than usual. Thirdly, for the first time no one accompanied them back to the boat and they were quite alone, and the night being so dark no one noticed them in the streets. They had missed the messenger, but the cap-

tain of the boat was on the lookout for them, and quietly extinguishing the lantern that Mr. Burns carried led them to their boats, where their servant joined them later.

When the bandits left their tea-shop, hoping to catch the missionaries on their return from the evening preaching, great was their surprise to find the boats gone and no signs of the foreigners. To search for them in the dark would have been impossible, so they separated and their evil scheme came to nothing, in the providence of God.

When at last the boatmen dropped anchor and the boats came to rest once more, with what thankful hearts did the little party gather together and read the ninety-first Psalm: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust." Truly it might have been written specially for them, and how their hearts were warmed and comforted as they thought of the danger they had escaped, and how sweetly the promise at the end must have fallen on those listening ears, "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SUNK IN THE MIRE.

THE middle of February, 1856, found them back in Shanghai, preparing for another journey, and while there they met the captain of a vessel that had just put into port. He was a Christian and had come to the weekly prayer-meeting that was held at Dr. Medhurst's house, and he had distressing tales to tell of Swatow, which had been his last port of call.

This was a flourishing town and busy trading centre, with a growing European settlement, although it was not one of the ports where by treaty foreigners were allowed to settle. The native inhabitants were noted for their wickedness, and piracy abounded in the surrounding waters, and unfortunately such European settlers as had gone there had added to the disreputable character of the place by their vices and lawless ways. There was no missionary anywhere in the district, and Captain Bowers, with the needs of the place much on his heart, pleaded for someone to go to the district.

If things had been risky at Wu-tien, they would be worse at Swatow, where there was

neither law nor order, and as Hudson Taylor listened to the captain's account he felt drawn towards this place on account of its deep need. Yet he put the thought from him, as he could not bear the thought of parting from Mr. Burns, whose companionship he had found so helpful. He wrote of their friendship, "Never had I had such a spiritual father as Mr. Burns, never had I known such holy, happy intercourse ; I said to myself that it could not be God's will that we should separate."

Several days went past and yet the needs of Swatow were always present before his mind, and he could not help feeling that God had called him to go there, and he dared not disobey. At last one evening, with tears in his eyes, he told Mr. Burns that he would not be able to accompany him on their proposed journey, as he felt God had called him to Swatow, and go he must. To his surprise Mr. Burns told him that only that very night he had intended telling him that he himself, after what he had heard, had felt impelled to alter his plans and go south to Swatow.

How wonderfully the Lord had worked in bringing them both to the same decision, quite independently of each other, and almost against their private wishes. Now they would be companions indeed, linked by the same call, bound by the Master's command.

On being told, Captain Bowers was over-

joyed and offered them at once a free passage in his ship, which was leaving in a few days. A day at a time had been Hudson Taylor's motto for some time past, and it was impossible to tell how the Lord might lead them, or what their best plan of action would be till they reached Swatow, so they made no plans, but looked to the Lord to guide them.

By this time, owing to the generous help of friends at home, Hudson Taylor was self-supporting, and had not needed to draw his salary for some time past, and he felt that the Lord was calling him to a life of faith in which He alone could supply his needs. It was the way he had originally intended to take, and now his Father had brought him back to the same point. With a free passage, he had supplies enough for his needs in hand, without any anxiety—yet another proof of the Lord's goodness to him.

Arrived at Swatow, they had some difficulty in finding suitable accommodation for some days, during which time they were allowed to sleep on board, thanks to the kindness of the captain. It would have been easy to settle on Double Island among the foreigners, but they wished to avoid the European element of the place with all its luxury and temptation to take their ease, and get among the Chinese people.

At last, however, through the friendly interest of a merchant from Canton, they were able to rent a room over an incense shop

in a very crowded quarter of the town. It was not a luxurious lodging, but it was better than nothing, and was near the people, which was the missionaries' great wish. They entered their room by a hole in the floor with a ladder from the shop below, but a trap-door was promised them which would give a little privacy. They divided the room into three smaller ones, so that each should have a bedroom and a joint sitting-room, while as to furnishing, Mr. Taylor writes, "Our beds are a few deal boards, and our table the lid of a box supported on two bags of books. We may get a better some day, but nothing of that sort is to be bought ready-made in Swatow. So for the present, at an outlay of two hundred and thirty cash (one shilling and a penny) we have completely furnished the house—with two bamboo stools and a bamboo easy chair."

Once settled in the place, the next question for Mr. Taylor was to learn the local dialect, which was quite different from the two he had already learned. After being able to speak fluently to those around him it must have been a great trial to begin all over again and learn a new language, and yet the Lord knew all about that when He sent him to Swatow. Mr. Burns was more fortunate, as with wider experience he had a knowledge of Cantonese, which enabled him to make himself understood from the beginning. Although they had gained a footing in the town, their



position was not without its dangers, for they were of course known to be foreigners in spite of their Chinese dress, and in the midst of the lawless conditions around they really carried their lives in their hands as they went about, and yet the Lord stood by and protected them.

The slave trade flourished here to a considerable extent, and shiploads of coolies, who had been enticed by small gifts of money and large promises to go on board the ships that were used for this horrible traffic, were constantly sailing for Havana and Cuba. Actually they were only engaged for a certain number of years, but very few lived to return. Packed together and kept as prisoners on board, many died on the voyage and those attempting to escape were severely flogged if retaken. This kind of traffic did not make foreigners very popular in the city, as from time to time stories leaked out of ill-treatment to these unhappy slaves. Then, too, enormous quantities of opium were imported yearly; and the use of this drug, which was terribly common in the district, degrades and impoverishes the population to such an extent that they become reckless and desperate towards those they consider better off than themselves. So acts of cruelty and violence were of frequent occurrence and passed unpunished and unnoticed.

In a letter Hudson Taylor writes, "If ever there were a place needing the blessings of

the Gospel, it is this place. Men are sunk so low in sin as to have lost all sense of shame . . . lower even than the beasts that perish. The official classes are as bad as the rest, and instead of restraining the evil are governed themselves by opium and love of money. And if it be possible to live worse lives than the heathen, then the sailors and others who frequent Double Island carry off the palm. . . Sin does indeed reign here, and as always, those most to be pitied and whose cases seem most hopeless are the women. However low men sink in heathen lands, women sink lower. Looked upon as hardly having any souls, girls are sold here for wives or slaves, and are left entirely without education. . . . English women little realise all they owe to the Gospel. And how few have love enough for Christ to come out here and seek to save the perishing. It does mean sacrifice ; but low as they would have to stoop, Jesus stooped lower."

Most of the days had to be spent in study, but at the end of four or five weeks Hudson Taylor was able to make himself understood a little, and would sometimes go out into the country district round for fresh air, and speak a word as opportunity offered. Mr. Burns was busy all the time, going from place to place preaching, so that they were often separated at this time. As the heat of the summer began to increase the little room over the shop became almost unbearable, and while

at study a towel always had to be at hand to wipe away the perspiration that would trickle down the face and neck. Mr. Burns, more used to the southern climate, did not suffer as much as the younger man, but when June came they decided they must seek other quarters if they were to keep well. The weeks spent in this town had not been without their effect, for the people had keenly watched the comings and goings of the foreigners in their midst, and their quiet, unselfish lives had told quite as much to those around as the message that they preached. One speaking of Mr. Taylor at this time said that it was very evident that he enjoyed the highest respect from the Chinese, and was doing a great amount of good among them. His influence was like that of a fragrant flower, diffusing the sweetness of true Christianity around him. The results may not have seemed very great, but a true spirit of Christ will always have its effect wherever it is seen.

As they could find no other quarters in the town of Swatow they decided to seek for a house in the villages or towns around, but this was no easy matter, for journeys had to be made on foot, as there were not so many convenient waterways in this part as in the Shanghai district. To walk for miles in the heat of midsummer was trying enough, but to be uncertain whether one could get a bed or food at night was even worse. Journeying in a boat was far less fatiguing, and one was

always sure of a roof overhead at night, an important consideration in China, both on account of the risk of malaria fever, and because of the bands of evil men who would not hesitate to molest and rob an unarmed man.

Hudson Taylor was faced with this difficulty one day about this time, when he and his servant had gone to take possession of a little house in the country that had been promised them. It was quite small, only one room downstairs and another over it, but it would answer their purpose and perhaps be a little cooler for the hot months than the crowded streets of Swatow itself. On his arrival the landlord met him with the news that after all he could not let them have the house, as the neighbours objected to his renting it to foreigners. He urged them to leave the town at once, and seemed most anxious to get rid of them, but Mr. Taylor felt he had work to do in the place, so he quietly went his way, distributing his books as usual and looking to his Father to guide as to what he should do.

In answer to his servant's anxious inquiries he said, "Never fear, the Lord will provide." The people, too, were curious to know what he would do, as he appeared so serenely happy and free of care. "Where will you sleep?" they asked, and were very much surprised at his answer, that he could not tell them because he did not know, but that his Father

knew all about his need and that He never forgot to provide for His children, so it would be quite all right. His quiet trust must have made a far greater impression on those poor heathen men than any amount of preaching, and how they must have watched to see what would happen.

It was true, his Father had not forgotten, and towards evening he was invited into a room over a barber's shop to spend the night after a supper of rice and gruel. Many people called to see him here, and one man brought him two beautiful scented flowers as a present. He took the opportunity of speaking of the beauties of nature and the goodness of the Almighty Creator, who provided all these things even for those who worshipped idols instead of the one true God. He then spoke of God's daily care of which he was himself a living witness, and this must have appealed to these men who had expected to see the foreigner wandering homeless that night. "It is curious," one man remarked, "how he speaks of God in connection with all things."

After this and other unsuccessful attempts to get better accommodation, they began to realise how fortunate they were to have obtained the room over the incense shop, and in spite of the intense heat and many discomforts they felt that evidently they were meant to stay there.

Just at this time the mandarin of the

district was taken seriously ill, and after having tried the native doctors with no effect, he sent for Hudson Taylor, hearing that he was a skilled physician. The treatment given by the young missionary was so successful that the invalid was soon well again, and so impressed was he that he urged Mr. Taylor to use his skill for others and open a dispensary where the sick could go. This had for some time been in the minds of the two missionaries, as they thought it might be possible to rent a room as a dispensary, and then they could use it for gospel preaching as well; for their own cramped quarters were quite unsuitable for this. The suggestion of the mandarin, confirming as it did their own hopes, made them decide to carry out the plan as soon as possible; but it would be necessary for Hudson Taylor to fetch his medical outfit and instruments from Shanghai, where he had left them in charge of a friend in the L.M.S. compound. He was very unwell at the time owing to the great heat, which affected him far more than Mr. Burns; so it was thought that the sea voyage would do him good, and the short change to the cooler northern districts put him right again, so that he would soon be able to rejoin his companion with his health restored and all the necessary supplies. On reaching Shanghai he learned to his dismay that his whole medical outfit had accidentally been destroyed during a fire in the compound, and

he knew that it would take at least six or eight months to get fresh supplies from England.

"Why had it been allowed to happen?" he could not help asking himself. It had seemed as though the medical work would be the opening they needed in Swatow, and now if he went back it would have to be without the necessary equipment, as he could not afford the exorbitant Shanghai prices. He had learned once before not to look at second causes when circumstances had come in that appeared to hinder his work, but this time it did seem that all was against him, and he could not yet see why God had allowed it. So writing to Mr. Burns to explain the cause of his delay he set off for Ning-po to see if Dr. Parker could help him at all from his supplies.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE HAND OF THE LORD.

**A**ND now began a series of mishaps that might have made Mr. Taylor feel that God had indeed forgotten to care for him, for everything seemed to go wrong ; still though he could not understand it at the time, yet his confidence in God was great enough to feel that His hand was behind all the vexation ; and as it proved, his greatest earthly blessing was the outcome of all these trials. So God had not forgotten him.

He set off with his servant carrying a good supply of Testaments and books as usual, for he intended to turn the journey to good account and spread the gospel as he went. The first part of the way was by water, and when they had gone as far as possible by boat, his baggage and bedding was put on shore and he engaged coolies to carry it for him overland to the port from which they would sail for Ning-po. Their progress was slow, as the coolies proved to be opium smokers and easily tired of their burden ; moreover, they did not wish to travel so far in the day as was planned, consequently



they lagged behind. At last, leaving his servant to deal with them, Mr. Taylor walked ahead after having arranged where they should meet, intending to hire a fresh supply of coolies for the rest of the journey.

After waiting some time at the appointed place, and seeing no signs of his servant or the baggage, he made enquiries, and was told that some baggage that answered to his description had been seen going on ahead some time before. By now it was almost dark, and too late to follow his servant, who he concluded had misunderstood his directions, though he could not understand how he had managed to miss them.

The first thing was to get a resting-place for the night, so going into an out-of-the-way inn, where he hoped the news that there was a foreigner in the town might not have spread, he ordered a meal. Cold rice and snakes fried in lamp-oil was all that could be had ! but not wishing to raise any suspicions he ate as much as he could, and then asked if he might spend the night there. After many questions as to his name and destination, which made him fear they would turn him out, and hearing he was a physician, they asked him to treat their daughter who had leprosy. He explained that he had no medicines, and at last was left to himself to spend the night as best he could in a miserable ground-floor room, which he shared with ten or eleven other lodgers. His bed consisted of

some boards raised on two stools, with his umbrella and a shoe for pillow; and he dared not take off any clothes for fear of their being stolen, but he was thankful for even this poor lodging, rather than have to spend the night in the street.

The next day, being unable to hear anything of his servant in the town, he continued his journey, hoping to find both servant and baggage at the port where they were to take ship for Ning-po. In the heat of the day, weary and footsore as he was, the eight miles' walk seemed much longer, and when he could get no news of his belongings he was greatly perplexed what to do. After being sent hither and thither in search of them, he was at last so exhausted that he sat down in a tea-shop to rest and engaged a man to continue the search for him, but all in vain.

On the return of the messenger, as it was getting late, Mr. Taylor asked the man to help him find a lodging for the night. This he agreed to do and they went to one place after another, but everywhere it was the same—no one would take him in. At last another young man, being sorry for him, said that he could go home with him for the night; so the messenger having been paid for his trouble went off, and he followed his new friend. But on reaching his house the people of the house were unwilling to have the foreigner under their roof, so he was

again turned away. So weary by this time that he could hardly stand, and despairing of gaining admittance anywhere, he at last sank down on the steps leading up to a temple, utterly exhausted. The temple was shut, but he could go no farther and decided to remain where he was for the night. Putting his money under his head for a pillow, he made himself as comfortable as possible, and in spite of the cold would soon have been asleep but that he saw a figure stealthily approaching him. He made no sign until he felt the robber begin to search his clothes, and then he said quietly, "What do you want?" There was no reply, and the man went away directly. As soon as he was out of sight Mr. Taylor hid as much of his money as he could about his person, and then settled himself once more.

But soon there were stealthy movements again, and through his half shut eyelids he saw two men approaching. As before he lay still till he was conscious of a hand feeling under his head for his money, and then he said as before, "What do you want?" On hearing him speak the men sat down at his feet, and when asked what they were doing they replied that they too were going to sleep on the temple steps. Knowing that they were only waiting to rob him, he got up and sat with his back to the wall, so that he should be able to keep awake, while the men advised him to lie down and sleep, for they

would protect him ! Presently a third man joined them, and so they sat all through the long weary night till dawn, Hudson Taylor repeating scripture to himself and praying aloud to keep himself awake. At last the men left him and he was able to get a little sleep which refreshed him.

The next morning there was nothing for it but to return the way he had come, to the place where he had parted from his servant and the coolies, and see if he could get any tidings of them. He was able to rest at a tea-shop during the day and bathe his inflamed and blistered feet, which wonderfully eased them so that he was able to continue his journey more comfortably.

On thinking it over he remembered that he had not made it a matter of prayer the night before that he should be provided with a lodging. He felt, too, that he had been wrong in being so very concerned about the safety of his few possessions, while all around him there were souls of how much more value. He felt rebuked that he should have cared less for the people in their need at that moment than for his own personal belongings. True, they were of value to him and he would find it hard to replace them, but of how much more value were perishing sinners in the eyes of his Father. And then he thought of Jesus, not having where to lay His head, and rejected of men. He knew what that meant now, and as he thought of

it joy filled his heart that he should in some measure follow in the pathway of his Master ; and he prayed as he went along to be kept following more closely, and to have a heart of love more like Jesus. With such sweet thoughts as these the way seemed shortened, and going into a shop for food who should he meet but one of the very coolies he had been seeking the day before. On being questioned, he said that the servant had gone to the house of a friend, taking the luggage with him, saying he would follow his master the next day. Making inquiries at the friend's house he could not get any news of his servant, beyond the fact that he had left there and they thought he had gone to Hang-chow. It was too late to continue his journey back to Shanghai that night, so he looked to his Father to provide for him a resting-place ; and this He did, as he was invited to sleep on board a trading boat that was lying stranded in the river mud.

In the morning, feeling very weary and with a bad sore throat, he was not very fit for journeying, but he prayed for guidance and strength, and continued on his way till he reached the river, where he would be able to go by boat to Shanghai. He had just enough money left to pay for his fare and to provide for his simple needs on the journey ; but on inquiring he found that no boats would be going that day, and perhaps not the next. This was serious, as the longer he delayed,

the more his money would be depleted, and soon he would not have enough for the journey; and this actually did happen, so that unfit as he was to walk he was in an extremity.

The kind-hearted captain of a junk found him fainting on the river bank, and taking pity on him, though he himself was not going in the right direction, he bargained with another boat to take him as far as Shanghai, and to trust the foreigner to pay the other end, he himself being guarantee for the money.

Thankful indeed was Hudson Taylor for this friendly help, and to be able to lay his aching limbs down in the bottom of the boat while he journeyed on without effort. Even the planks felt soft to his weary body after all he had gone through.

Once back in Shanghai he made inquiries for his servant, and found that it was as he had feared, that the man had stolen and gone off with all his possessions. It was a serious loss as it would cost him about forty pounds to replace, and this amount he had not got; but he was also perplexed as to what action he should take with regard to the servant. He could perhaps have recovered his property had he put the matter in the hands of the police, but the more he thought about it, the more he felt it would be hardly in keeping with his profession as a Christian; and, moreover, he had long been praying for this man's conversion, how then could he

hand him over to the cruelties of a Chinese jail? So instead, he wrote a letter to his former servant, telling him that he knew of his wrong-doing, and but for the fact that he was a Christian he would have had him punished by the law, but that because he was a servant of Jesus he wished to return good for evil and would not harm him.

The Shanghai missionaries offered to club together to buy him another outfit, but he, knowing that none of them were too well off, felt sure his Father would provide for him in some other way, so he waited and prayed. Eight or ten weeks before a letter had left England from his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Berger, but it was much delayed on its journey, and now reached him immediately after his return to Shanghai. On opening it, he found a letter full of love and encouragement and a cheque for forty pounds. Could anything be sweeter to him just then than that his Father should have sent just the right amount? How his faith was strengthened by this fresh reminder that "Before they call, I will answer."

There was a sequel to this loss, too, that is worth the telling. In writing home he told the story of his exercise as to how he ought to deal with his runaway servant, and the action he had finally taken; and by some means the letter was seen by Mr. Müller of Bristol, who was mentioned earlier in this story. He was so struck by the Christ-like

behaviour of the young missionary that he felt he would like to have fellowship with him in his work, and he sent him a gift to cover his loss ; and from this time forth his interest and prayers were unfailing, and though living a life of faith himself with several hundred orphans to care for, he was able to help in a very practical way with the spreading of the gospel in China.

Once more Mr. Taylor set out for Ning-po and this time he arrived safely, without loss of time. It was a great pleasure to be with Dr. and Mrs. Parker again and to hear of the interest in the medical work he had undertaken in that city. In twelve months nine thousand cases had been treated at the hospital, and though at first Dr. Parker had not been able to preach in the local dialect, yet other missionaries in the district took an interest in the hospital work, and took it in turns to preach in the dispensary, so that those who came to have their bodies healed might also hear of the way of healing for their souls.

Money had been raised for a permanent hospital to be built, and the land was then being levelled for the building to begin. There was much to interest Hudson Taylor in this busy community where all the missionaries worked so happily together. He could not help contrasting it with the difficult work to which he was going at Swatow. Here there was no ill-feeling towards foreigners,



just because they were foreigners, for the Chinese had become used to the missionaries in their midst and had watched their unselfish Christ-like lives, till there was no thought of enmity. Miss Aldersey, with her two young helpers, Miss Burella and Miss Maria Dyer, had for years had a boarding-school in Ning-po for Chinese girls. She was much respected and looked up to in the district, where it was rumoured that, as in England there was a queen instead of a king, she had sent Miss Aldersey out to China to be her representative. Her young companions, who were orphans and under her care, in spite of their youth were very efficient workers, as they were expert in the local dialect, and much beloved by those among whom they worked.

After a month spent in this happy community, Mr. Taylor, having been supplied with drugs by Dr. Parker, was ready to return to Swatow to rejoin Mr. Burns, who was finding the life very lonely without his companion, yet had not wished him to return until the worst of the heat was over. But now there was a further delay, as he was asked if he would wait a week or two to conduct a party of missionaries and their little children to Shanghai. This he agreed to do, as travelling was very uncertain at that time, and he was glad to be of use to others whenever possible. When they finally were able to get off, it was with several of

the party ill, and the voyage was a rough one, so that they were most thankful to have so capable and willing a nurse to tend the invalids.

Early October found him back in Shanghai and ready packed to sail for Swatow, and best of all Captain Bowers was in port and gladly welcomed his former friend as a passenger.

But on the very eve of sailing a letter came from Mr. Burns to stop him. There had been trouble in Swatow. He himself had been arrested and taken to Canton, where he was forbidden to return to his former district, while the native teachers had been imprisoned and their fate even now was uncertain. Since the British authorities had objected to their settling in Swatow, there was no more to be said for the present, and now it seemed to him that he could understand much of the delay that had prevented his return sooner. As once previously, the way had again closed before him and he recognised the Lord's hand in it and was not dismayed, though he had looked forward to meeting his beloved friend Mr. Burns again, and had hoped for a continuance of their happy work together. Still it was not to be, and he looked for guidance as to what his next move should be.

## CHAPTER XV.

### YE SHALL HAVE A SONG.

**A**T this time Hudson Taylor was much troubled at his connection with the Chinese Evangelisation Society, as he could not approve the principles on which it was then being run. A few months previously another missionary with his wife and family, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, had been sent out to join Dr. Parker in Ning-po, so that the expenses of the society had largely increased, though he himself had not had occasion to draw upon their resources for some months past.

While in Ning-po they had discussed the Society's position, which was giving them some concern, as they understood that it was in debt for some hundreds of pounds, yet was still continuing to send out workers to China. The position seemed to them all quite a wrong one in principle, as they felt it was no more right for the Society to be in debt than it would have been for one of them, yet strange to say the committee did not seem able to share their views, and the missionaries were much cast on the Lord as to what they ought to do.

At the same time Mr. Taylor was in trouble

over an even more personal matter, for during his visits to Ning-po he had become much attached to the younger of the two helpers of Miss Aldersey's school, Miss Maria Dyer, and would gladly have asked her to become his wife, but he felt the uncertainty of his position, both as to the field of his future labours and also as to his actual income, for how could he ask one to share the path of faith to which he felt he had been called? He hoped that when at a distance he might be able to conquer his feeling for her, but it was not to be, and week by week the longing for a companion in his labours grew, although he felt that his attachment was quite hopeless.

Could he have known the position in Ning-po he would have felt far happier, for the lady of his love had been much attracted to the young missionary from the very first. She knew that he was much criticised on account of his difference from other missionaries and his adoption of Chinese dress, but it was just this that interested her. His humility and the spirit of self-denial that made him give up all for his work, and his unswerving faith in God, who was a living reality to him, all found an answer in her own longing desires. His obvious poverty would have been an objection to some, but not so to Maria Dyer, for she had a heart that made her yearn to live right among the people as he did, and minister to their needs.

Perhaps, left to himself, he would never have found courage to ask one who seemed so far above him to share his lot and be his wife, but friends discovering his love, sympathetically encouraged him to proceed, and at last the day came when his loved one had actually promised to be his wife, if he could gain the consent of her guardian in England. Strangely enough Miss Aldersey was very much against the match, and did all she could to hinder it, and no doubt it was not a very desirable union from this world's point of view; for the young man had no home to which he could take his bride, he had no settled sphere of work, and no prospects so far as this world was concerned. On the other hand, he had a pure and fervent love to offer, and the inexhaustible resources of the promises of God, which are to be had by faith, and to the girl who loved him so devotedly it was more than enough.

On the eve of their wedding Hudson Taylor felt impelled to remind her of the difficulties of his pathway, wholly dependent as he was upon God for supplies, and to offer her her freedom if she wished to draw back. "Have you forgotten?" her sweet voice replied, "I was left an orphan in a far-off land. God has been my Father all these years, and do you think I shall be afraid to trust Him now?" No wonder he loved her, for she was a fitting wife for such an one! In due course a letter came from England

giving consent to their union, and with deep thankfulness they learned that their uncertainty was at an end.

All this had occupied months, and during the time Hudson Taylor had been working, sometimes in Shanghai and sometimes in Ning-po, according to where he seemed to be needed most. During one of his visits to Shanghai, which lasted several months, he and Mr. Jones had held meetings in the city and had been much encouraged by the interest shown and the large number that gathered daily to hear the word, and remained afterwards for conversation with the missionaries.

One young incense-maker, who had been driven nearly to desperation by illness and other troubles, confessed that he had tried to get relief by becoming a vegetarian, by saying many prayers, and by burning incense to many idols, but all in vain. "But when first I heard you preach," he added, "I found what I was longing for. It did me no good, however, until I heard about Jesus. But He just suits my case. If you had instructed me to be immersed in fire instead of water I should have desired it with all my heart."

Yes, Jesus just suits our case, yours and mine, as much as He did that poor incense-maker, who knew so little, but was very conscious of his deep need.

Before they left Shanghai to return to Ning-po both Mr. Jones and Mr. Taylor,

after much prayer and consideration, wrote to England resigning from the Society to which they had belonged. While having much affection for certain members of the committee, they felt that they could no longer be connected with anything that did not at least seek to carry out the principles laid down in the scriptures for disciples. It was not that they wished to be independent, for more than ever they felt cast upon the Lord, but they felt that "His righteousness" must come first. For Mr. Jones it was a serious step with a wife and child to care for, and for Mr. Taylor with his then unattained desires it was no less testing, for all the other missionaries of his acquaintance had regular salaries, and he would be thereby rendered even more peculiar and open to criticism than ever. Still neither of them hesitated.

Once more back in Ning-po Hudson Taylor took possession of a house in the city that Dr. Parker had used formerly as a school for boys and a dispensary, and which he was now glad to hand over to his former colleague. Downstairs was a room very suitable for holding meetings, while upstairs the large room was later divided into several smaller ones to make living and bedrooms. Almost as soon as he had settled into these new quarters he was taken ill and confined to his bed for a month. Perhaps he needed a resting-time, or perhaps his Father had that to say to him with regard to his new







Photo : W. F. Taylor.

A BRIDGE OF BOATS IN THE CHEKIANG PROVINCE OF CHINA.

pathway of entire dependence that might have passed unheeded in the full and busy days of ordinary life. That it was a time of sweet communion we know, by the fact that during the resting period he copied out in Chinese characters and hung upon his wall the two words "Ebenezer," "Hitherto has the Lord helped us," and "Jehovah Jireh," "The Lord will provide." These were good thoughts to rest the soul upon, and many were the eyes that rested upon these words in wonder during the days that followed.

The preaching of the word in the room below drew large numbers every day, and of those who came at least some received blessing at that time. There was one, a prosperous business man, Mr. Nyi by name, who seeing the crowds entering the door one evening and hearing that it was what the Chinese called a "Jesus house," entered with them. He was a devout Buddhist and had often felt uneasy about his sins and the possible future of his soul, when it should leave his present body; and as he listened to Mr. Taylor and heard the wonderful words from the third chapter of John, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," his heart beat quickly, for was not this what he wanted, "everlasting life." The preacher went on to tell of the brazen serpent that was lifted up in the wilderness, and then of

the death of the Lord Jesus, who died so that all who look to Him might live. "I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me." As he sat there listening, something of the wonderful way of salvation and the love of God entered his heart, and he felt that he had found something that met his need as nothing had ever done before.

When the preacher had done speaking, his mind was made up, and rising from his seat he said earnestly, "I have long sought the truth, as did my father before me, but without finding it. I have travelled far and near, but have never searched it out. In Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, I have found no rest; but I do find rest in what we have heard to-night. Henceforward I am a believer in Jesus."

Such a confession made a great impression on those assembled, as he was a man much looked up to and respected; but who can tell the joy it brought to the heart of the one who had delivered the message of his Master, and had found such a response to it? There is no joy like it.

Mr. Nyi was a daily learner from this time forward, and also found time to accompany Mr. Jones on his street preachings, and it was his delight to tell others of how he had found Jesus. He was a thoughtful man, and many were the conversations held in the little sitting-room with the foreign teacher. One day he unexpectedly asked, "How long

have you known the truth in England ? ” On being told that it had been known for some hundreds of years, he exclaimed in amazement, “ Is it possible that you have known about Jesus for hundreds of years, and only *now* have come to tell us ? My father sought the truth for more than twenty years, and died without finding it. Oh ! why did you not come sooner ? ”

It was an echo of the cry of the old Indian woman, who on hearing of the gospel for the first time said, “ If it is so very important, why did you not come sooner ? Now I am too old to understand it ! ”

What could the young teacher say, as with shame he felt the sting of the question ? He had come as soon as he could, perhaps, but what of others before him ? Could they plead that it had not been the Lord’s will that they should go ? It was a solemn question, and one that he did not feel that he could answer.

Soon after he was well again, one of the missionaries in Ning-po was taken ill with a very virulent type of smallpox, and being an unmarried man there was no one to nurse him. His sister, Mrs. Way, had a family of small children, and Mr. Way was on a preaching tour, so there were none besides natives to care for him in his isolation. With his usual spirit of loving care for others, Mr. Taylor felt that he should go to the rescue, as, though at this time he was not actually engaged, he

knew it was only what his loved one would have approved of had he been able to consult her wishes.

So at a moment's notice he was hurried away from his labours to the quiet of a sick room, and the constant strain of night and day nursing that it entailed. He had been recently vaccinated, so had no fear for himself, and he was able to be both doctor and nurse, so that no one else need run any risk of infection. From the beginning it was a hopeless case, but for a week he did all that could be done to ease the sufferings of his friend and bring comfort to his mind, not sparing himself in any one detail, until, the end came. It had been a time of much waiting upon God, and now that it was all over he was faced with an unexpected difficulty. During the week he had been obliged to change his clothing constantly, and now the only safe thing to do was to burn everything that had been in contact with the disease, so as to lessen the risks of spreading the infection elsewhere. The thought that was occupying his mind was how should he replenish his wardrobe? He had shared what money was sent him with Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and at the moment he had nothing in hand for a new outfit. Still his Father knew all about it, and He would meet his need somehow; the young man's faith was not long tested, for just then a box from Swatow containing all he had left

behind him in that place, that had been lost in transit, suddenly turned up after fifteen months ! Was it pure chance that brought that box just at the critical moment ? Some might think so, but Hudson Taylor called it answer to prayer, and thanked his Father accordingly.

We might have thought that being in dependence on God for their own resources would have been test enough to most people's faith, but he and his colleagues were very much distressed at the intense poverty with which they were surrounded, and felt compelled to try and help in some way those who were worse off than themselves, as well as minister to their souls. So they began to give free breakfasts to the very poor, followed by a gospel message, and before long they were feeding sixty to eighty people a day. It may have seemed a foolhardy thing to do in their position ; but Mr. Taylor was assured that if his own resources were small, his Father's were limitless and he could draw upon them to any extent in the Master's service. So day by day the sweet message of God's grace was told to those who had first had their bodily needs satisfied, and their Father did not fail them.

But the day came when after paying all expenses and providing for the next day, which was Sunday, they had not a single dollar left in hand. What should they do ? Must they tell the poor creatures not to come

on Monday morning ? Assuredly not, for if it was the Lord's work, as they believed, He would certainly provide for it ; but their prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," had added force to it that morning. Mr. Taylor tells the story of what followed in a letter : "That very day, the mail came in a week before it was due, and Mr. Jones received a bill for two hundred and fourteen dollars. So once again we thanked God and took courage.

"The bill was taken to a merchant, and though there is usually a delay of several days before we can get the money, this time he said, 'Send down on Monday and I will have it ready.' We sent, and though he had not been able to buy all the dollars, he let us have seventy on account. So all was well. Oh, it is sweet to live thus in direct dependence upon the Lord, who never fails us. On Monday morning the poor had their breakfast as usual. 'O, taste and see that the Lord is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in him.'"

This was only one of the many times when their supplies were reduced to a very low ebb. It was not that money was slow in coming from England, for more than ever before was being sent by friends and well-wishers, but there were so many needs to be met out of it, and yet the Lord never failed them. It might be that, like the widow with the cruse of oil, they had only just enough left for one more

meal, but they were never allowed to want. "Lacked ye anything?" said the Lord to His disciples on the eve of His betrayal, and they said, "Nothing."

Shortly before Mr. Taylor's marriage they had invited friends to tea, among whom was Miss Dyer, and as the day drew near their supplies began to run short, and they found themselves in serious difficulty. Their expenses had been heavy in connection with the work among the poor, and mail after mail had come in without bringing any money, until at last on the day when they expected their friends the only coin in the house was one cash (the twentieth part of a penny). There was enough food in the house for breakfast, but beyond this nothing, and they could only look to the Lord to come in and give them fresh proof of His care. Had it only meant fasting for themselves they would not have felt it so much, but with guests coming, what could they do? After earnest prayer together Mr. Jones and he decided that they ought to dispose of some article of furniture to meet their immediate needs, but on looking round they could not see anything but perhaps the clock that could be done without, for the furnishing was of the simplest character. They could, of course, easily enough have bought all they needed on credit, but this was contrary to their principles, and even for so important an occasion they could not go into debt. So the clock



was taken to be sold, and the merchant was quite prepared to buy it, but not for ready money. "Of course you must leave it for a week that we may see how it goes," he said, "no one would think of paying money down for an untried clock."

This being the way things are done in China, there was no more to be said, so back the clock came to the sitting-room, and the missionaries once more considered what they could do. They had an old American stove that might perhaps fetch a little for old iron, so though they regretted parting with it, there seemed nothing else to be done. The iron foundry was at some distance on the other side of the river, so they set out carrying the stove between them to do the best they could. When they reached the river they found that the bridge of boats by which the crossing was usually made had been carried away in the night, and as it would cost two cash each to go across by ferry clearly the journey could not be completed. So thinking that perhaps God had some other plan for their help they returned home to an empty larder. Mr. and Mrs. Jones and the children had some time previously been invited out to dinner that day, and when they got back Mrs. Jones had already gone, but Mr. Jones would not leave his companion under the circumstances; so they hunted through the cupboards to see if anything was left, and found a small packet of

cocoa. This they made with a little hot water and it revived them somewhat.

Knowing the position, their Chinese cook came and begged his master to take what little he had left of his wages, but, touched though they were at the offer, Mr. Jones explained to him that if they did this, even for necessary food, it would be running into debt, and this they had never done yet. Their faith was sorely tried, but they told the man that they were sure their Father would not forget them. Retiring into the study they fell upon their knees and waited upon God literally to come to their help, and while so employed they were interrupted by the voice of their servant crying, "Oh, teacher, teacher, here are letters!" Once again the mail had arrived some days before it was expected and just in time to meet their need, for there was a generous gift from Mr. Berger in England, far more than enough for present necessities.

Gathered round the table with their guests that evening, they could not refrain from telling them the whole story. "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord." No doubt the Lord allowed these times of testing to prepare them for the days that were to come, when their faith might be even more sorely tried in other ways. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not," said our Lord.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE DAWNING OF THE DAY.

**T**HERE were great doings in the mission house in Bridge Street during the first few weeks of 1858, for the bride and bridegroom were coming home to the little suite of rooms over the mission hall. It was their own teacher who had married, and his wife was already well known to many, so that it was no stranger coming among them.

It did not take the young couple long to settle in, for their arrangements were of the simplest, but what a different place it seemed to the young husband, now that there was one with him to share his joys and sorrows, to plan with and talk over the day's difficulties. With his beloved wife's bright presence there it seemed home indeed; with her intimate knowledge of Chinese ways, the housekeeping was a very simple affair. If the mission-house had been popular before, it became doubly so now with her gracious ways and pleasant face. She would go in and out of the houses and courtyards, and always found a welcome, for she was always as full of sympathy and interest in each

member of the family, and the children all loved her, so that she had no difficulty in gathering some together to start a little school.

To her husband it seemed that he had a fresh and closer link with the people round him, and they seemed to understand and know him better. It was a very happy home, and something of its happiness was radiated to those outside, so that they came and came again, attracted by the words they heard and drawn to those living in their midst whose lives seemed so different from their own.

If all was peace inside the mission-house, it was very far from peace outside. The country round was in a state of excitement and uncertainty. Bands of rebels were at large and no one knew quite how far the trouble would spread. Those who were wealthy and could do so left the district for a more peaceful area, while those who had to remain buried all their money and treasure to keep it safe. In China it takes but a spark to raise a mighty conflagration, and to add to their troubles that summer, there were unusually heavy rains, so that there was great fear that the crops would be ruined, which would mean famine with all its attendant horrors. It seemed as though the fountains of the heaven were opened and would never shut again, for day after day the rain poured down with never a pause, though

rich and poor alike offered gifts and money to all the shrines and idols in the district.

All this excitement naturally had its effect on the mission work, but the hearts of the missionaries were kept in peace, while their united prayers went up that all might be used by their God for the furtherance of His work. One night Mr. Taylor spoke to a room full of people on the story of the prodigal son, illustrating it with a brightly coloured picture, for the Chinese love pictures. It was a new story to many, and as the speaker dwelt on the unworthiness of the son and the love of the Father, and told of the return of the wanderer and the welcome that greeted him, there were hearts that were touched; so that when told that any who wished could stay behind for private conversation, nearly everyone remained. At last all left but three, and these seemed really in earnest, and to desire to accept Jesus as their Saviour.

One of them, Neng-kuei by name, from this time came regularly to Mr. Taylor's evening school to learn to read, and he confessed the name of Jesus boldly to those around him. He was a skilled basket-maker by trade, and had always been accustomed to work seven days a week for his master, at the rate of twopence a day and his food. Now, however, he bargained with his master for a free Sunday, so that he might be able to get to the meetings. This his master was

quite willing to grant, provided that he got the same amount of work done in the week, and agreed not to be paid or receive his food on the day he did not work. This was a heavy loss to Neng-kuei, as he now had to spend some of his hardly-earned twelve pence on food for Sunday; but then the day of rest was worth it, and if his purse was empty his heart was full, and the joy carried him all through the week. This man was a true evangelist, and in after years converts sprang up in place after place as the result of his preaching the gospel.

Mr. Taylor was discovering the value of his evening school, for he felt it most important that all the converts should learn to read the Bible for themselves; and as Testaments could be had of the Ning-po dialect printed in ordinary Roman letters, there was no reason why everyone should not learn. The Chinese characters were difficult and it might take years for a scholar to learn to read; but with the new writing it was found that an intelligent child could learn to read in a month, and even a busy woman with no previous education could soon pick it up.

A Confucianist teacher who helped in the school was himself converted through reading the scriptures, but his home life was difficult, for his mother was much opposed to anything to do with the foreigners.

One day this man came to Mr. Taylor and asked to buy a New Testament. "I want

the easy kind, with the Roman letters," he said.

Mr. Taylor, in some surprise, asked him if he would not rather have it in the more scholarly character, for he was an educated man and could read.

"It is not for myself," he replied earnestly, "but for my mother. And will you not pray that she may learn to read it, and obtaining heavenly influences may have her heart changed and her sins forgiven?"

At first the mother would have nothing to do with the foreigner's religion, but at last her desire to read overcame her dread of the foreign book, and helped by her son she was soon able to read the words of life that had brought joy to his heart. It was not long before Mrs. Tsiu confessed Christ boldly, and opened her house for prayer meetings and readings, which were much blessed to those around. She and her son, together with the basket-maker, and the linen merchant, were among the first of their children in the faith at that time, and were cherished and taught as such, and in after years they were much used to the blessing of others.

But not satisfied with making her house a place of refreshment for others, Mrs. Tsiu began to visit her neighbours; and day by day she might be seen in and out of the courtyards and houses with her most precious possession wrapped up in a coloured hand-

kerchief. She and her Testament were welcomed everywhere, for what wonderful stories she could read and tell, and something of the love that she read of must certainly have got into her heart, for one could see it in her face, and that was better than words.

But during her visits she found one poor old woman who was blind and very deaf, and the darkness that had shut up her eyes seemed to have fallen upon her heart as well, for she could only complain of her troubles, and refused to be comforted. Mrs. Tsiu with her ready sympathy felt for her sad state, and tried to reach her with words of God's love and grace. But it seemed to be all in vain, for every word had to be shouted into her ear, and her mind seemed so clouded with discontent that it was difficult to reach her. Little by little, however, it seemed that something was happening, for she became less fretful and more anxious to hear the words of life that her friend was so anxious to impart, and then she agreed to go to the mission-house. Here, though she could neither see nor hear, yet the peace of God descended upon her spirit, and she felt His presence. "Why does my heart feel so much *wider*," she asked, "when I come inside these doors?" Gradually the light penetrated, and with painstaking care her new friend taught her word by word texts from her precious Testament, and verses of the



hymns they sang, till she too was confessing Christ as her Saviour.

If the neighbours had wondered at Mrs. Tsiu's happiness, they must have wondered still more at the transformation worked here, for gone was the grumbling and discontent, while Mr. Taylor wrote of her, "A happier Christian than that old woman I have seldom if ever met. She loved the house of God, she loved the people of God. In fair weather or in wet, in hot weather or in cold, she was to be found leaning on the shoulder of her grandchild, and wending her way to the meetings, some of which were more than a mile from her home. She could see nothing and hear nothing, but she met with God and He blessed her; she met with His people, and their hearty salutations did her good."

Teacher Dzing was another grief-stricken soul to whom Mrs. Tsiu and her son were used in blessing. He had, in his young days, been well-off and much respected, but he had been through many troubles and was bowed down with the weight of them. His sons had been a great grief to him and his wife, and had wasted the family fortune with riotous living and evil ways, until they were cut off by death. Now he and his wife, poor and dishonoured, had nothing before them but a childless old age. Their home was one comfortless room, from which each morning the poor old man went forth with a pack on his back selling small odds

and ends from house to house. It was a hard life, and he who had once been looked up to must now put up with snubs and rebuffs, so that he might earn the few pence that kept body and soul together. But brighter days were in store for him with the coming of Mrs. Tsiu. Perhaps he visited at her door, and instead of harsh words he was met with a kindly word and smile, and she seeing his sad and downcast looks told of her own joy, and begged him to come to the mission-house and hear more of the wonderful Jesus-doctrine.

If this was what made her so different from her neighbours, it was certainly worth trying, so he became a regular visitor to the inquirers' class, where he was met by a kindly interest that restored his self-respect, and a love that went much deeper. He was a scholar and could read already, so was often appealed to for the exact meaning of a Chinese character, and little by little the meaning of it all became clear to his soul. He saw himself as a sinner who needed a Saviour, and he saw Jesus as one who was longing to meet his need. It was a great discovery and one that changed his life. What an opportunity he now had! The pack that had seemed so irksome and degrading before, now was a welcome burden, for did it not open many a door to him? And while the good wife of the house was selecting her embroideries or oddments, he

had much to tell of the new friend he had found; and so the good news was carried into many a backyard and out-of-the-way courtyard, bringing joy to many a one.

There is another story of God's work about this time that must be told, concerning the little village of Ozi, far away in the valley of the Feng-hwa river. This was the birth-place of the basket-maker Neng-kuei, but he had long ago left the village on the death of his young wife and was living in Ning-po, as we have heard.

It was a farming district, and most of the inhabitants of the village worked in the fields which lay round about. On a certain day, there lay in one of the houses, not far from Neng-kuei's early home, one who seemed to be dying. It was Wang, the farmer; and no one had the time to stay with him, as field work must be done or there would be no crops. So there he lay all alone, and it seemed to him that his sins had never before appeared so numerous, or his good deeds so small and so few. How should he face the gods with such a burden? It was a terrible question, and not one that he could answer, but as he lay there trembling with the thought of it, he suddenly heard a voice calling him by name. Very much surprised, as he had thought himself alone, he dragged himself from his bed and managed to reach the door, only to find there was no one there. Wondering at his mistake, he got back to

his bed exhausted and lay down once more. But again that voice called with such urgency that he dared not disobey, and though his trembling limbs would barely support him and he was obliged to hold on to the furniture, again he reached the door. Still there was no one there, indeed he had hardly expected to find anyone this time, but now thoroughly frightened, he hid his face under the coverlet, for he felt that the call could be none other than the summons of death that he was expecting. When the voice came again, however, it was to reassure him, telling him not to fear, for if he would make medicine of a certain herb and drink it, he would certainly recover. But this was not all, for as soon as he was well, he must journey to Ning-po, and there he should hear of a new religion that would take away his sins and bring comfort to his heart.

The medicine was prepared and, as the voice had foretold, he immediately began to recover and was soon quite well. But Ning-po was fully thirty miles away, and how could he leave his farm to go ? and if he did, how should he keep himself in the city, as he had no money, for he and his family lived on the farm produce ? However, a great deal can be done by determination ; so Wang set out with his sickle, having made up his mind that he would cut the grass by the roadside as he went and sell it to people with cattle and so provide for his needs.

Arrived in Ning-po, he set about his search. In the daytime he cut grass under the city wall or on the many graves in the graveyard, but no one could tell him anything about the new religion, and no one seemed at all interested. At last one day, sitting in a tea-shop, he overheard an ordinary working-man sitting at the table, saying something about sins being forgiven. It was Neng-kuei, and I must tell you how he came to be there.

It was the busy time of year for basket-makers, and his master had told him that he could not have his Sunday free, for there was too much work to do, and what might be all right for foreigners was inconvenient and contrary to Chinese customs. When reminded that he had agreed to release Neng-kuei on Sunday, he replied that his workmen must work seven days a week or be discharged. That was on Saturday evening, and after spending the Lord's day as usual at the meeting-house, Neng-kuei set about finding work with a new master on Monday morning. But no one would have him, for his old master had sent round to all the guild men engaged in his trade asking them not to hire him, and explaining the circumstances.

Neng-kuei thought that this must surely be the work of Satan, who was trying to hinder his worship; and perhaps he was thinking of the exhortation, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," when he

made up his mind to spend the day giving away tracts and trying to bring others to Jesus. It was this very day that he met Wang in the tea-shop, and it was not long before the grass-cutter had told him all his story, and was hearing for the very first time the story of God's grace and the way of salvation. Collecting his few belongings Neng-kuei took the grass-cutter to his own home, answering many questions as they went. He told Wang that he must learn to read, so that he could see for himself what the Book said; and encouraged him, telling him how he himself had learned and what a comfort it had been to him.

Before night the grass-cutter had learnt the first six letters of the alphabet, and together they had knelt and praised God for the way He had drawn them together, and the happiness in that little room would have been hard to equal anywhere. No doubt Neng-kuei had told the story of the difficulty of his employment, and they had prayed about it, asking for help, and if so, the answer soon came, for on seeking work the next morning the first man he went to was glad to engage so clever a workman, for his promise had only applied to Monday, and Tuesday was quite a different matter!

It was a strange story they had to tell at the mission-house when Wang was first introduced there, and the missionaries hardly knew what to make of it, but as time went

on it was evident that there was a real work of God going on in his soul, for he stood firm in spite of sneers and rebuffs, and refused to believe anything but good of his new and now beloved friends. That his Christainity was very real was evident to all, and Mr. Taylor was deeply touched when one day during the heat of summer he explained what comfort he had in thinking of Jesus and heaven. "You see I have to cut grass out in the burning sun," he said, "and sometimes I hardly know how to keep on. And then I think of Jesus—Jesus and heaven—and my mind becomes peaceful, and my body so much rested that I can do twice as much as before. Oh, it is wonderful the difference it makes when you just think of Jesus!"

It was not long after this that Neng-kuei was used to the blessing of another man named Wang, a house painter by trade, who had never yet come in contact with the missionaries, though he lived in Ning-po. Working one day inside the house of some wealthy people, the guest-hall of which he was decorating, from the top of his ladder he saw a man carrying baskets entering the hall. Presently the ladies of the house, elegantly dressed, came out to see the baskets and order what they wanted, but it was not until their voices were raised in a vexed protest that he took any notice of what was being said.

The ladies evidently wanted baskets for holding incense, while the basket-maker was explaining as clearly as he could that as he no longer worshipped idols or held them in any reverence, he could not make or sell anything for their service. He told the ladies that he served the Lord Jesus, who was the one and only Almighty God, who could forgive the sins of those who confessed to Him; and far from demanding offerings as the idols did, He had Himself provided a way of peace and pardon for everyone. But the ladies were not greatly interested; they had other things to think of, and they soon tired of the conversation and retired to their own apartments.

Not so Wang the painter; for as soon as the ladies were gone he eagerly called to Neng-kuei and begged to hear it all over again. "Whose heart the Lord opened," that is the only way we can explain the miracles that happen daily, as the result perhaps of a few chance words; but the fruits will last to all eternity, and Wang became one of the most successful soul-winners in Ning-po and one of the most earnest in spreading the glad tidings.



## CHAPTER XVII.

I WILL SHEW MERCIES UNTO YOU.

THE summer of 1859 had come, and with it a great joy to the mission-house, for a little daughter had been born to crown the joy and happiness of that already happy home. They called her Grace, for they felt that the Lord had dealt so graciously with them in calming their fears and giving them peace of heart that they would like to always be reminded of it. For although peace reigned in their little home, outside it was far otherwise, for an anti-foreign feeling had for some months been fermenting in the city, and no one knew quite how it would end. So strong had been the feeling and so constant the threats of violence, that most of the Europeans who could had left the city, or taken shelter on foreign vessels or in the foreign settlement. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor felt they could not desert the little band of converts, who might easily find themselves at the mercy of the mob if a riot should break out, so they stayed quietly on in Bridge Street, only taking the precaution of having a boat always moored ready on the canal that ran past their back door.

The day came when a hostile crowd gathered outside the mission-house shouting, "Beat the foreigner," "Kill the foreign devils"; but unseen the angel of the Lord was encamped round about the house that day, for though they could easily have battered in the door, no actual violence was offered, and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor praying inside for protection, after a time heard the mob moving in another direction.

Mr. and Mrs. Jones also remained in the city with their children, and in a letter written at this time he said, "We feel that we are living only from night to day and day to night. The people are thirsting for revenge. . . . They mix up together missionaries, traders and the government, the war and the coolie traffic. . . . We are now, as I write, in the midst of all this, our wives and our little ones in the same danger. But we are resting on Him who restrains our enemies with, 'Thus far, but no further'; and who to us is saying, 'I will never leave thee.' He has made His word very precious to our hearts . . . and even in these trying times we have been encouraged by some inquiring the way of salvation."

If there was joy in the mission-house, a great sorrow had come to Dr. Parker; for his wife was suddenly stricken down and died in a few hours, leaving behind her four young children, one of whom was seriously ill at the same time. The doctor, already worn

after five years' work without respite, was in no condition to meet the blow that fell upon him ; and it became evident that he would have to leave his work for a time to the care of others, while he took his motherless children home to Scotland.

There was no doctor in Ning-po who was free to undertake the work, yet Dr. Parker was very unwilling to close the hospital and dispensary with the winter coming on, so he asked Mr. Taylor if he thought he could at any rate keep the dispensary open, even if the hospital had to be closed. There was very little money in hand, and Dr. Parker had largely supported the hospital by his private practice, the entire proceeds of which were used for this purpose ; and in his absence this income would cease ; yet if the hospital were to be kept open its expenses would continue just the same. It was not a matter to be taken on lightly, but the more Mr. and Mrs. Taylor prayed about it, the more convinced they became that it was the Lord's mind for them to keep both hospital and dispensary going, and that He would support them in it. To close the hospital because of shortage of funds would shew that they felt that the Lord was not equal to the occasion, and if there were no power in prayer, then they might as well leave China at once.

The little band of converts and the mission-house could well be left to Mr. Jones' care,

so within a week Mr. and Mrs. Taylor and their baby girl had moved into Dr. Parker's house adjoining the hospital. So suddenly had it all happened that there had been no time to let friends at home know of the new responsibilities they had undertaken, or the sudden increase in expenses that would have to be met, with thirty in-patients and all the helpers to be fed and kept. Yet, though they knew it not, unexpected help was even then already on the way, for their Father had known what their needs would be.

On taking over the hospital, Mr. Taylor called all the little band of helpers together and explained to them that the hospital would now be run on a different method. He could not guarantee that they should always have the salaries to which they had been accustomed, for he had only enough money in hand to carry them on to about the end of the month. After that they must look to the Lord to supply their daily needs, but whatever happened they could not go into debt, for that was against the principles laid down in the Bible. He told them that any who wished to do so could leave the hospital, but that he would be glad of the help of any who would remain on the new terms. As he had expected, those who left the staff were the ones who were only doubtful Christians, but those who remained were men and women who really trusted the Lord and had a desire for the souls of others.

Dr. Parker had for some time wanted to weed out his staff, but had seen no prospect of replacing them with helpers of the right type. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, however, appealed for help to the little band of Christians who had so frequently gathered with them at Bridge Street, and they were not disappointed. One and all they gave their help and their prayers that the work might go forward; some gave all their time, and others what hours they could spare from their outside work, but their presence in the hospital soon made it a very different place.

Mrs. Taylor was gifted in organisation, and she quietly took the whole management and running of the place into her own hands, so as to leave her husband free for the actual medical work and to care for the spiritual well-being of the inmates. The staff worked smoothly under her quiet orders, and she herself spent a considerable part of the day working in the wards or dispensary, as well as attending to all correspondence and accounts. One wonders what time she can have had left for her baby daughter, but we may be sure so precious a treasure was never neglected!

It was not long before the patients even began to find a great difference in the hospital, for it was just like one big home, and all worked so happily and lovingly together, that one could not but feel the difference. With the helpers, too, it was not a case of

putting in a certain number of hours, for when they might have been free they stayed to talk or read to the patients, or perhaps to sing with them. It soon became known that a new method was at work, and many were watching curiously to know what would be the outcome.

We may suppose that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were very much cast upon the Lord at this time, for it was a great work that they had undertaken, yet they felt it was His work and that He would provide for it. Still it was a time of testing, as their money was coming to an end and their supplies were running low, and yet day after day went by and no answer came to their prayers.

At last Kuei-hua, their faithful cook, reported one morning that they were then using their very last bag of rice.

"Then," said Mr. Taylor, "the Lord's time for helping us must be close at hand"; and so it proved, for before the bag was finished a letter from Mr. Berger arrived, enclosing a cheque for fifty pounds. But this was not all, for Mr. Berger wrote saying that his income had been suddenly largely increased, and that as he already had enough for his personal needs, he would be glad if his friend could let him know of any way in which he could use the money in the Lord's service in China. Could anything have been more wonderful than that such a letter should come at such a time? Truly the Lord works

wondrously, and why should we ever fear to trust Him? There was a meeting for praise in the little chapel that morning such as they had never known before; and soon the good news was known in the wards and the poor heathen patients looked at each other and said, "Where is the idol that can do anything like that; have they ever delivered us in our troubles, or answered prayer after this sort?" "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." Truly it was a time of great joy and blessing.

Towards the end of the year Teacher Dzing, the pedlar, was taken ill with bronchitis and was received into the hospital, where he could get comforts not possible in his own poor home. It was soon evident that he was nearing the end, and he delighted in the thought of going to be with the Lord. His gratitude and appreciation for all that was done for him were touching to see. His wife came to see him and he pleaded with her to turn to Jesus as her Saviour and find the same rest and peace that he was enjoying in spite of a weak and suffering body. It was New Year's Day, and after listening to the reading of the twenty-third Psalm and some hymns that were sung for him, he said, "All the praise will belong to Jesus," and later, "Jehovah, my Shepherd."

It was the first one of their little flock to be taken home, and they felt his loss keenly,

as he had endeared himself to them during the year since he had first come to the mission house ; but his work on earth was finished, and the loving Father saw that his tired servant was no longer fit to carry the heavy pack from house to house in all weathers, and so He took him gently home. "In thy presence is fulness of joy ; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

There was another tired servant in that hospital too, who would soon be called upon to lay down his work for a time. The heavy strain to which he was so unused had tried Mr. Taylor more than he realised, until he began to shew signs of lung trouble. With the coming of the spring the dispensary was closed for a short time, so as to enable Mr. and Mrs. Taylor and their baby girl to go for a short rest to the nearest hills. The ten days away worked wonders, but as soon as the round of duties was again taken up it was quite clear that the missionary's health was unequal to the strain, and before long such serious symptoms developed that, in writing to his parents it is quite apparent that he did not expect to live long.

It was thought that a voyage to England and complete rest might work a cure, while in his prostrate condition he could not possibly recover in that trying climate. So the hospital and dispensary were closed, and Mr. Jones, though himself far from well, was left in charge of the work ; while their faithful



friend and helper, Wang the painter, was willing to leave his family under his father's care and accompany them on their long journey, for they were not in a fit state to travel alone.

Arrived at Shanghai, they were able to book passages on board the *Jubilee*, a sailing-ship soon to leave for London. It was not a happy or comfortable voyage, for the captain proved to have a terrible temper, that made life on board very disagreeable, but the little party of Christians found peace and joy in their Father's love and in the gradually improved health of the invalid, and many were the prayers that they offered up for those they had left behind, that they might be kept faithful to the One who had called them, and be diligent in His service.

Before leaving Shanghai, Mr. Taylor had been much rejoiced at receiving a letter that told of the conversion of his younger sister. For years they had been praying on her behalf, and many were the pleading letters the brother had written to his sister, but now the family circle was complete, and he could only praise God for His goodness. What his own future was to be, Mr. Taylor could not tell, but he was in God's hands, and during the long four months' voyage he had time to wait upon the Lord that all might be planned for His glory.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### HIDDEN RICHES OF SECRET PLACES.

**D**URING the winter of 1860, White-chapel was surprised by the appearance in her midst of a Chinaman in full dress complete with pigtail. On inquiry it proved that he was living at No. 1, Beaumont Street with a missionary and his wife who were from abroad, with whom he was installed as cook and laundryman; it was none other than our old friend Wang the painter. Just what he thought of London does not appear, but his devotion to his missionary friends never faltered, and he had proved himself a friend in time of need, both on the voyage and afterwards in London. It is generally somewhat of a shock for a converted heathen man coming for the first time to a nominally Christian country, to find that by no means all are Christians. But it is perhaps as well to realise that it is not enough to have the Bible and head knowledge of Christianity unless Christ is also received into the heart.

Mr. Taylor had begun a course of medical studies at the London Hospital and had rented a house close by so as to waste no

time going to and fro. For in spite of the doctor's verdict on his arrival that he must never return to China if he valued his life, his thoughts were never for long separated from her needs, and hanging on his study wall was a large coloured map of China, over which he pondered by day, and which often filled his dreams by night. It had seemed a good opportunity to complete his interrupted medical course, for during his life at the hospital in Ning-po he had realised the usefulness of a more detailed knowledge and a wider experience than he yet possessed, and with returning health he was able to study.

He had also begun a labour that was even nearer his heart, and that was a new and more correct translation of the Ning-po New Testament with references, which the British and Foreign Bible Society had undertaken to print as soon as it was ready. It was a big undertaking in addition to his medical studies, but he was assisted by a member of the C.M.S. staff who was fluent in both Chinese and Greek, so that he was able to translate from the original. Both Wang and Mrs. Taylor were also of great service in the work, with their intimate knowledge of the local Ning-po dialect as well as the English language. Had they known that it would keep them in England for six years before its completion their hearts might have failed them, but they had long before seen the need

of a new and better edition than the one in use at that time, which had many inaccuracies.

Mr. Taylor had refused to accept the doctor's verdict as to his health, and he fully expected to be restored so that he could again return to his work in China. It was hard to get letters from Mr. Jones telling of work that could not be done for lack of helpers, of converts who drifted for lack of shepherd care. How well he could picture the scene and how dear it all was to his heart, and how gladly he would have gone back to it all at any risk to himself. But the Lord was holding him back, and he was learning as never before that the closed door may be as much an indication of God's will as the open one.

That there was work for him to do in England it was quite clear, and if the way was not opened yet for his return to China, at least the way was open to the throne of grace, and he could spend much time in prayer for the work that lay so near to his heart. If he could not go and preach to those far-away millions in China, he could tell his countrymen in England of the greatness of her needs, and plead for men—earnest and spiritual men—to go and carry the gospel to the inland provinces, that never yet had heard the word. When he had been in China himself and had worked in Shanghai, Swatow, and Ning-po, the greatness of the work in each district was such that it was hard to

realise that it was only just the very fringe of the vast country. But now, as he looked at the map on his study wall, and his eyes wandered westward and ever westward, and then northward and then southward, the immensity of its need and the wonder of its possibilities dawned on him. For the vast interior was opening up at this time to the foreigner as never before, but where were the men who would go? Surely in England there were spirit-filled, devoted Christian men who, if they knew of the need, would go! His work it should be to make it known.

We get an interesting peep into the family life of the little house in Beaumont Street during the early days of their stay in London. A young mechanic from Barnsley, James Meadows by name, who had heard of the very special need for a whole-hearted Christian man to go and join Mr. Jones at Ning-po, felt that the Lord was calling him; but before definitely offering himself he came to London to see Mr. Taylor and ask his advice. He felt it to be a very serious step, and while he was not in the least afraid of living by faith, and was prepared to give up good prospects, he wanted to be quite sure that he was fitted for the work, and that he was being definitely guided by the Lord.

He had heard that Mr. Taylor was studying at the hospital, so was not surprised that he was living in a very poor neighbourhood, but it came upon him something in the nature

of a shock to see how very scantily and poorly the house was furnished inside. Nothing more than the bare necessities of life were there, and yet no one seemed to notice the absence of the comforts that are usually taken for granted in other homes. Mr. Meadows himself was not accustomed to luxuries, but his cottage home in Barnsley was on a very different scale from the house that he now entered. Everyone was so busy too, there did not seem much time for mere housekeeping, for more important work was afoot. The Ning-po Testament was the chief interest in the home at that time, and they pressed on with all the speed they could. Delays and difficulties were constantly being encountered, but if this was inevitable, no lack of energy on their part should hinder the work.

He soon found, however, that any lack of physical comfort was more than made up for by the atmosphere of love and spiritual power into which he was introduced on joining for a time their family life. Their home was literally only a temporary resting-place to this devoted man and his wife; so why waste time and money in accumulating possessions that would only be an incumbrance? It was not that they cared less for comfort than other people, but that such things took a secondary place in their thoughts, for the Lord's work must come first, and they kept themselves ready for marching orders at any time.

As may be imagined, the cooking and service at meals was none of the best, and what would have disturbed Mr. Meadows in his own home he was surprised to find did not trouble him here, for his mind was taken up with many other things. The conversation round the table more than made up for any deficiencies in other ways, and he was held spell-bound as he listened to the missionary detailing on the one hand the appalling need in China, and on the other the wonderful story of God's goodness in caring for him and his, and supplying their needs. No wonder that after such a recital the young mechanic decided to obey the call that had come to him. It might be only a drop in the ocean, as indeed one could not but feel in the face of the magnitude of the work, but refreshment brought to one thirsty soul and God's blessing on it may lead to more than we can even dream of.

By the end of two years Mr. Taylor had gained his medical degree, and now was more free to work in other directions, and chiefly at the Testament, which was still a long way from completion, for unexpected difficulties had arisen and delayed the work.

In writing to his parents he said, "We have many difficulties before us. I do not see my way at all: but it is enough that He does who will guide and supply all our need. . . . I wish Barnsley were not so far away. But when we get home we shall be

all together. . . . We must not seek our rest here, must we? We must press forward, counting everything (and that includes a great many things) but loss, that we may win Christ, and be found in Him."

During all this time Mr. and Mrs. Taylor had been entirely dependent on the Lord for their supplies, and He had proved that whether in China or in England, the position was the same, as long as they were in the path of God's will. "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Still, there were times of testing, as his journal shews, but only once did they find themselves unable to meet an amount when it fell due, and then the Lord soon made up the deficiency. On another occasion their money was getting very low and they had friends staying in the house, and by Saturday night they found themselves reduced to two shillings and fivepence halfpenny. But early the next week they had a gift of poultry and other farmhouse produce from the country, followed by a gift from a relative that eased them of their anxieties for some little time.

Another time, as the result of a mistake, there was again a day of difficulty. It was August and they were leaving the crowded, hot London streets for a holiday in the North of England, and before leaving Mr. Taylor put the rent money in his desk to await his return, when it would fall due. After a wel-



come change he came home leaving his family behind in Barnsley, and on going to his desk found that there was one pound short in the amount.

On thinking it over he realised that it was his own mistake, but at that moment he had not enough in hand to put the matter right, and the very next day the landlord would call for the money. It was not a pleasant thought, as never before had he failed to be able to pay, and the man was a harsh, unsympathetic type of man who would not be likely to pass it over in silence. But there was still time for God to come in, so he betook himself to prayer and laid the matter before the Lord. The morning came, but with it no relief, and he waited for his expected visitor in a trembling frame of mind. However, time passed on and he did not come, and as the day wore on it was evident that something had detained him, and perhaps help would come before the morrow. The next morning punctual to his usual time came the landlord in a more pleasant frame of mind than usual, saying that he had been hindered from calling the previous day most unaccountably. *He* might not have been able to explain the delay, but to Mr. Taylor it was quite clear, as he had only that morning received a pound by post that had just made up the amount. As the years went by it became more and more clear to him that it was never God's mind that His children

should be in debt. In writing to another, he said, "It is really just as easy for God to give beforehand, and He much prefers to do so. He is too wise to allow His purposes to be frustrated for lack of a little money; but money wrongly placed or obtained in unspiritual ways is sure to hinder blessing. And what does going into debt really mean? It means that God has not supplied your need. You trusted Him but He has not given you the money; so you supply yourself and borrow. If we can only wait *right up to the time*, God cannot lie, God cannot forget; He is *pledged* to supply all our need."

Yes, these years in London's back streets were very necessary, and no doubt at times very trying ones, but pouring over the New Testament day after day he grew in the knowledge of God's grace and in the power of the word, and strength and wisdom were added to him. Often the work of revision would be broken off, and the little family kneel down and pray that workers might be given for China, who would be prepared to make sacrifices for Christ's sake to carry the gospel to those who had it not.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### HAVE YE NOT HEARD ?

**T**HE day came when Mr. Taylor was invited to a conference for spiritual edification at Perth, where he was to give a missionary appeal on behalf of China. He was unknown in the district, and when a slight, fair young man stepped on to the platform many felt surprise and wondered who he was. It was an ordeal to one unaccustomed to speaking to a large audience such as was then before him ; but he could at least pray—that was to him no strange or unusual exercise—and he bowed his head, speaking to his Father with such simplicity and earnestness that the vast congregation was moved, and a solemn hush fell on them as he began to speak.

That address was like no other missionary address they had ever heard, and they were held spellbound while the young missionary told them the story of an incident that had happened on the Yangtze River while he was in China. He and Mr. Jones were travelling by boat from Shanghai to Ning-po, and on board the same boat was a Chinaman who had been abroad and had spent some

time in England. He was called Peter and the missionaries were particularly interested in him on account of his evident friendliness. He knew the outlines of the gospel in an uninterested sort of way, and Mr. Taylor had not ceased to urge him to consider the matter more fully and come to Jesus as his Saviour, but without effect so far as he knew. One day Mr. Taylor was in his cabin preparing to go ashore to distribute tracts at one of their ports of call, when he suddenly heard the cry of one falling overboard, and then a splash in the water below. He was on deck in a moment and at once missing Peter asked the boatmen what had happened. They were lounging in their usual attitudes and had not taken the slightest notice of the occurrence, or made any attempt to give any help to the unfortunate man. At once Mr. Taylor had the position in hand, and hauling down the sail jumped into the water. But the tide was running fast and it was very difficult to mark the position where the Chinaman had disappeared, for his body had not come to the surface, and in spite of all his efforts he could find no trace of him. Just then he caught sight of some fishermen with a drag-net, which revived his hope, as he felt sure the drowning man must have got entangled in the weeds or be stuck in the river mud, and this would be the only way to find him.

He shouted to the men to come quickly

with their net, as a man was drowning, but to his surprise their apathetic reply was, "It is not convenient ; we are busy fishing."

"Never mind your fishing, come at once, and I will pay you well," shouted back the missionary in agonised suspense.

"How much will you give us ? " came back in measured tones.

"Five dollars ! only don't stand talking. Come quickly, or you will be too late ! "

"Too little," was the reply. "We will not come for less than thirty dollars," and they went on with their fishing.

Again came the anguished voice, "I will give you all I have if you will only come before it is too late," only to be answered by an inquiry as to how much he *had* got.

Eventually with fourteen dollars promised, worth about four pounds ten shillings at that time, they moved across and let down their net. At the very first cast they brought up the missing man, but it was *too late*. While they had haggled over the money the man's life had fled ; and now his lifeless body lay on the river bank, while the young foreigner with a burning pain at his heart used every means in his power to restore animation, but without avail.

A murmur of indignation ran through the audience as the earnest voice ceased speaking for a moment. "Was it possible that even heathen men were so utterly callous that they cared no more than that for a human

life ? ” This and many another question flashed through the horror-stricken minds of the great assembly during the momentary pause. But now he was speaking again, and in such a fashion that their thoughts took another channel.

“Is the body then of so much more value than the soul ? We condemn those heathen fishermen. We say they were guilty of the man’s death because they could easily have saved him and did not do it. But what of the millions whom we leave to perish, and that eternally ? What of the plain command, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,’ and the searching question inspired by God Himself, ‘If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain ; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not ; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it ? and he that keepeth thy soul doth he not know it ? and shall not he render to every man according to his works ? ’ ”

He then spoke of China and her needs, of her vast populace, for the most part entirely without the gospel message ; and pleaded for men, aye, and women too, who would, like one of old, leave their fishing and follow the Master if necessary to the world’s end.

“It will not do,” he went on, “to say you have no special call to go to China. With these facts before you, you need rather to ascertain whether you have a special call to

stay at home. If in the sight of God you cannot say you are sure you have a special call to stay at home, why are you not obeying the Saviour's plain command to go? Why are you refusing to go in the power of the Lord against the mighty? If, however, it is perfectly clear that duty—not inclination, not pleasure, not business—detains you at home, are you labouring in prayer for these needy ones as you might? Is your influence used to advance the cause of God among them? Are your means as largely employed as they should be in helping forward their salvation?"

It was a tense moment; for these were searching questions and not to be lightly answered; and all present felt the Spirit's power behind the speaker's words; so that the meeting broke up almost in silence to go to their homes. But the words spoken that day were carried far and near, and the message found a response in many an out-of-the-way place.

There was a young blacksmith's assistant, Rudland by name, in a village in Cambridgeshire, who read a copy of the address and was profoundly impressed by it. Longing to know more of the speaker and his work, he called at the farmhouse belonging to Mr. Merry to get further information. Mr. Merry, an earnest Christian man, had been in the habit of opening his kitchen and holding meetings for the village lads, several of whom had been converted, and Rudland among

them. Many were the happy evenings they had spent round the big, old-fashioned fireplace with their Bibles, learning helpful lessons from the kind-hearted farmer. So now Rudland turned to his friend for information on the subject of China, but it was not much he was able to learn, as Mr. Merry knew very little more than he did, except that the speaker, Mr. Hudson Taylor, lived in London.

Speaking to his master, the blacksmith, who was also a Christian, he met with very little encouragement. Perhaps he feared to lose a valued assistant, but one day he brought out a book printed in Chinese, and shewing it to the young man he said, "See, this is the language they talk over there; do you think you could ever learn to speak it?"

It certainly does look a most forbidding language to the uninitiated, and perhaps he hoped to put him off, but not young Rudland, for he quietly asked, "Has anyone else learned it?"

On being told that a few had, he replied, "Then why not I?"

Following the address at Perth came many invitations for Hudson Taylor to speak in different parts of the country, and also applications for more particulars from men and women who had felt the call to go to China in response to his appeal. It was a testing time for him; as he was himself



hoping to return to China with his wife and family, which now numbered four children, and he was prepared to take any with him who should offer themselves.

But then the thought came to him that, supposing he should influence missionaries to go to China, and when there their faith should fail, or they should find themselves unsuited for the work; or suppose they should not receive enough to support them and should starve, would they not blame him? It was a fearful thought and one over which he dared not linger, and yet he could not shake it off. No doubt it was the enemy's subtle suggestion, but not one to be easily met, unless by implicit faith in God's power. At last one day he spent a whole morning in solitude, in an agony of mind such as would give him no rest, praying that he might get peace and be shewn the solution of the problem. Then the thought came to him that supposing God did inspire a band of men to go to China, and then the very worst happened and they all died of starvation, they would only go straight to heaven, and if one heathen soul were saved thereby, would it not have been worth while? But soon the more comforting thought came, "Why, if we are obeying the Lord, the responsibility rests with Him, not with us." And so peace came and his doubts vanished, and his wife, who had known something of the crisis through which he was passing, wondered at



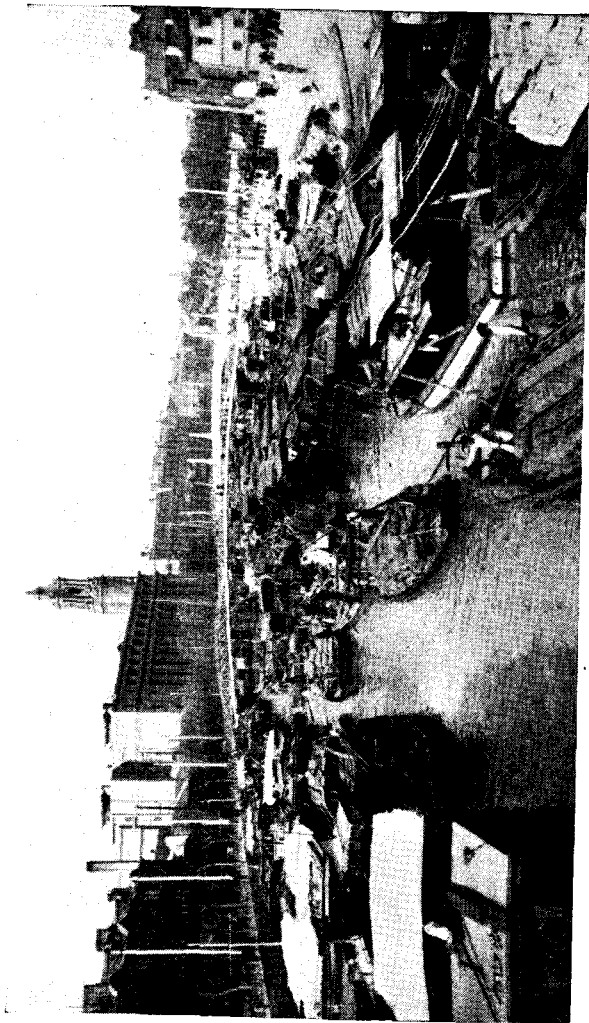


Photo : W. F. Taylor.

TRAFFIC ON THE SOOCHOW CREEK, SHANGHAI.

The Building in the centre with the tower is the new Chinese Post Office.

the change in his appearance until he told her. Now he could cry with a joyful heart, "Thou, Lord, shalt have all the burdens ! At Thy bidding, as Thy servant, I go forward, leaving results with Thee."

The way seemed clearing at last for them to return to the land of their adoption, and among many applications to go with them, it seemed that there were sixteen who were fitted for the work and had nothing to detain them, if money enough were forthcoming to provide for outfits and passages. Contrary to the usual custom after a missionary address, Mr. Taylor never would ask for a collection. He was speaking one day in Hertfordshire, and at the close of a more than usually arresting address, his host rose and was preparing to say that he was sure all present, moved by what they had heard, would go away burdened, unless they had the opportunity of shewing their sympathy with his work. He was interrupted, however, at this point by Mr. Taylor, who said that he felt that it was better that they *should* go away burdened ; as he did not wish anyone to give money under the influence of a passing excitement. He would rather they went home and asked the Lord what He would have them give. He said that there were many channels for their money, but it might be that God was asking for a more costly gift. It might be the gift of a son or daughter, or perhaps of themselves, and it would not do to salve

the conscience by putting a contribution into the collecting box.

It was an unusual line, and his host commented on it that evening, saying he thought he had made a mistake. The next morning, however, he handed Mr. Taylor a cheque for £500, saying, "You were quite right in what you did, for yesterday I should gladly have given a five pound note to help China, but last night I could not sleep, and God spoke to me so that I felt I could not give less than this."

Another time he was invited to give a series of drawing-room meetings in Norfolk, where there was an unusual interest in his work. At the close of his stay, his host and hostess wished to shew their appreciation of his work in a practical way, but though wealthy people, they had already given so largely in other directions that they had not at the moment much available. On talking it over together, they decided not to renew the insurance policy on their large glass-houses, which was just then falling due, but to devote the money to the Lord's work in China instead, for they felt they could trust the Lord to take care of their greenhouses. And He did not forsake their trust; for not long after there were terrific storms in the district, and much damage was done in the country round, a great deal of glass being broken, but not one single pane was damaged at Langley Park.

And so the money came in, in one way and another, for as Mr. Taylor had said, the Lord would not have His purposes hindered for the sake of a little money.

There were many who thought that the party of prospective missionaries were absolutely mad, and as one remarked, "more fit for Bedlam than China !" That they should attempt to go abroad without leaving a committee behind to collect money for them was an unheard of thing ; and the prophecy was that people would soon forget all about them and that they would then all starve !

"And yet," replied Hudson Taylor quietly, "I am taking my children with me, and I notice that I do not forget that they get hungry and need breakfast, dinner and supper. We have a very experienced Father to deal with, for if He was able to sustain three million Israelites in the wilderness for forty years, do you not think He can easily provide for a party of twenty-two ? We have the plain command, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things [food and raiment] shall be added unto you.' If anyone was not satisfied with that he had better not go to China. We can afford to have as little as the Lord sends us, but do not want anything that He does not send us ; and for that matter if money should run short, there are plenty of ravens in China, and the Lord could send them again with bread and flesh as He did of old."

What more could be said in the face of such faith ? but to exclaim as our Lord did, "I thank thee, O Father . . . because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

There were others, and among them many missionaries, who were very strongly against unmarried ladies offering themselves for the interior of China ; for at that time there were very few unmarried missionary ladies even in the Treaty ports, and none inland at all. To these objections Mr. Taylor no doubt replied, much as he had done years before when he was first thinking of going to China himself. A returned traveller from that country had said to him, "Why *you* would be no good there, for the people would fly in terror from you, with hair and eyes that colour !" (For blue eyes and fair hair were at that time almost unknown in China.) "And yet," he replied, in no way put out, "the Lord knows the colour of my eyes and hair, and He has called me." If the Lord had called these unmarried ladies to do His work, He knew all about their state and was well able to protect them.

The question of the adoption of native dress also caused much criticism, but Mr. and Mrs. Taylor both felt that while it might be possible near the coast to carry on missionary work in European clothes, it would be impossible in the inland provinces where

they hoped to go. And so, in the face of much criticism on the one hand, but many prayers on the other, the little party prepared to leave England.

Wishing to travel by the Cape route to avoid expense, they were offered the entire accommodation of the sailing ship *Lammermuir*, which just suited their requirements ; and they were rejoiced to find that they were sailing with a Christian captain.

The sailors were a godless company, and had been more than a little put out to hear that they were to carry a party of missionaries. One would have been bad enough, but a whole party of them ! Things could not be much worse was the general feeling of the crew. Yet as time went on their ideas began to change somehow, for these people were not quite what they had expected. For one thing they seemed so happy, yes, actually *happy*, and they seemed to find such pleasure in singing hymns and reading their Bibles, and yet they were always pleasant-spoken and ready to lend a hand with any odd job. More than once the sailors had been very glad to avail themselves of the services of the expert blacksmith and clever carpenters who were among the party. It was really very upsetting to their preconceived ideas, for there did not seem to be a long-faced Christian among them !

That was in the early days ; but it was not long before in answer to the prayers of



that little band of missionaries, and all those who were remembering them at home, a work began among the men which will bear fruit to all eternity, and many can bless the day the *Lammermuir* was chosen as the transport for that party.

Much might be written about the voyage, with its joys, aye and its sorrows too, for Satan desired to sift them as wheat; and how they were overtaken by storms in the Yellow Sea, and were reduced to such a state that even the ladies had to help with working the pumps; but through it all they were kept in peace and safety until in a battered condition the little vessel cast anchor off Shanghai one Sunday morning in September, 1866. Worn with the tossing they had received and loss of sleep, they were thankful to be able to spend the day quietly on board, offering up prayers of gratitude to the One who had brought them safely through all the dangers, and had spared their lives to serve Him in China.

Now, within sight of its shores, they pledged themselves afresh to His service, and sweet were the songs of praise that sounded out over the water, and were heard by many a wondering boatman floating in his little craft by the river-side.

## CHAPTER XX.

WITH EVERLASTING KINDNESS.

REMEMBERING the difficulty Mr. Taylor had experienced on the first occasion of his landing in Shanghai to find accommodation for one person, it is not surprising that he should have felt very anxious when their journey neared its end as to housing their party of twenty-two. But the Lord had gone before them and had not left a detail of that sort to chance, for unknown to the missionary, Mr. Gamble, a friend of his Ning-po days, had recently moved to Shanghai, and had taken a house in the native city with a disused theatre attached, which he was intending to use as a warehouse.

Hearing of the arrival of the ship with his friend on board, Mr. Gamble hired a native boat and rowed out to the *Lammermuir* to offer his services and the accommodation that his bachelor home could easily give, as it was a large house ; and with the warehouse for all their luggage, together with the printing-presses and household goods they had brought, there would be room for all. Captain Bell insisted on entertaining all the party

on board for several days, while quarters were prepared for them, and Mr. Taylor paid a short visit to the old mission-house at Ning-po, escorting one of the party there to her future home.

There were great changes in the mission at Ning-po since he had left it six years before, though there were still some familiar faces. Mr. Jones had given his life for the work, and Mrs. Jones and her family had returned to England; Mr. Meadows was still there, but his wife had died some time previously, and there were others working in the district who had joined him not long before. There was great rejoicing in the mission-house to see their beloved friend again, and to Mr. Taylor the joy was equally great. Teacher Tsiu was still there, and he together with three of the other converts accompanied Mr. Taylor back to Shanghai to help in any way they could.

What a time it was, and how happy they all were together! The stage of the theatre was still there, and by pinning sheets together for walls they managed to divide it up to make sleeping places for six of the party, and the rest slept in the house. Boxes all had to be unpacked, and goods that had got damp with the stormy weather had to be dried; and there was four months' washing to be done, so no one need be idle! They had brought washing, mangling and ironing apparatus with them, so it was all

set up in the warehouse, and the women of the party set to work under the direction of one among them who was an experienced laundress. She wrote about this time: "We often wished friends at home could have looked in upon us, just to see how happy we were ! It would have rejoiced their hearts to see how lovingly, how kindly the Lord was dealing with His children." And all this time they were putting in every spare minute in studying the language, and some were already able to speak a little and progressing well.

During the month spent in Shanghai the change had to be made to native dress. No doubt some of the party felt it very keenly ; Mrs. Taylor herself, indeed, had never yet worn it, and she knew from experience that it would carry with it many restrictions. For the Chinese would pass over many little points of etiquette in a foreigner, who could not be supposed to know any better, that they would criticise very severely in one who was dressed as they were themselves. For instance, she must never again commit the serious indiscretion of taking her husband's arm in the street.

In speaking of the advisability of the change, Mr. Taylor said, "We give you credit, dear friends, for being prepared to give up not these little things only, but a thousand times more for Christ's sake. . . . Let there be no reservation. Give yourself

up wholly and fully to Him whose you are and whom you wish to serve in this work, and there can be no disappointment. But once let the question arise, 'Are we called to give up this or that?' once admit the thought, 'I did not expect such-and-such inconvenience or privation,' and your service will cease to be that free and happy one which is most conducive to efficiency and success." "God loveth a cheerful giver."

The time with Mr. Gamble was a very happy one, as he was a most kind and genial host, indeed, he felt warm friendship for his large family and was sorry to part with them when the time came, and he utterly refused to take any payment for board and lodging, returning the money that was pressed on him, to be devoted to the mission work.

They had hired native junks to carry them and their possessions in search of a new destination; where it was to be they did not know, for they could not tell where the Lord might open a door for them, but it was four weeks later before any of them were able to find a resting-place.

They had hoped to leave little parties of the newly arrived missionaries in different towns, but Mr. Taylor found it impossible to rent premises anywhere until they reached Hang-chow. Here, however, they found a welcome; for a friend of Mr. Gamble's was there to meet them, and they were able to rent a large though rather ramshackle house

that had once belonged to a mandarin. It was the very thing for them; and though only the upper storey was vacant at the moment, it answered their purpose, and the tenants on the ground floor would soon be leaving.

Moving in after dark, so as not to attract attention, they were settled into their new home before the people of the city were well aware that there were foreigners in their midst. It was very cold, being winter time, and several of the party were ill, including the children, so they were thankful to be anywhere rather than in the boats. The house was indescribably dirty, and the floors had to be scraped before anything could be done with them; and the roofs were open to the rafters, through the cracks in which the wind whistled decidedly more than was comfortable; but the men soon set to work and made paper ceilings on wooden frames that improved matters. Gradually the place became more homelike, though of comforts there were none, and very little that was foreign in appearance to trouble the most fearful of their visitors. They now fed like the Chinese, using bowls and chop-sticks, and those who chanced to come in at meal-times were reassured and remarked, "These people are like ourselves; they eat our rice and wear our dress, and their words we understand."

Miss Faulding, one of the missionary ladies,

wrote: "The lodgers are to leave next week; they occupy principally the ground floor. . . . I am so glad for them to have been here, for many come to Chinese prayers and listen attentively. We could not have visited out of doors just yet . . . but I read and talk with these women every day, and they seem to like it. One woman I have great hopes of. She has given up burning incense, and says that since we came she has begun to pray to God. They are all employed in making imitation money out of silver paper to be burnt for the use of dead relatives—a great trade here. . . . Yesterday we had a congregation of ten neighbours gathered in by the woman who is so interested, besides our lodgers and servants."

As soon as possible a dispensary was opened, which rapidly became very popular, Mr. Taylor sometimes seeing as many as two hundred patients a day. This gave splendid opportunities for preaching and personal speaking, and gradually the ice was breaking and the atmosphere becoming friendly. "If only Mr. Taylor could be in three or four places at the same time it would be a decided advantage," wrote Miss Faulding; "there is hardly any knowing what his movements may be; yet he goes on so quietly and calmly always—just leaning upon God and living for others—that it is a blessing merely to witness his life."

Several journeys were made in the sur-

rounding district, as some of the party were anxious to get out among the Chinese on their own, so that they might master the language more quickly at close quarters with the people, and in one or two places premises were rented and out-stations formed.

On one occasion one of the party described his journey in a small river boat: "I had often heard of lying heads and tails, but now we had to practice it ! Next to Mr. Duncan was an unhappy prisoner with chains round his legs, sentenced to banishment from his own province for murder. Opposite were a couple of opium smokers with their lighted lamps. Farther on, packed very closely, were five or six mandarin's runners, a few soldiers, and other people occupying the remaining space." It was not exactly travelling with every comfort, but at least it gave opportunity for holding services and speaking to the people, and they made the most of it.

As the summer came on with unusual heat, which the newcomers felt all the more that they were not yet acclimatised, the children were all so very unwell and Mrs. Taylor really ill, that Mr. Taylor decided that the whole party must move for a change to the hills near by, which could be reached by boat in six hours. And what a welcome change it was ! They had been able to rent a couple of long narrow buildings that were attached to a temple, and here the whole



party was able to camp and enjoy the country air. The hills were beautiful and bright with azaleas and wistaria, and after the hot and crowded city, the sound of running water and the shade of trees was a wonderful relief. Here the children blossomed out and regained their health, and it was a joy to see them running about without restraint.

Suddenly, in the midst of all their pleasure, without warning the blow fell, and their eldest child, their little daughter Grace, lay dying. It seemed impossible to believe that she who had been so full of life only a few days before was now to be taken from them ; but though their hearts were filled with anguish, yet was not even their darling child one of the things included in the "all things" they had surrendered to their Father in connection with China ? They had known the risk in bringing their little ones to that land, but who can count the bitterness of a loss until it is actually suffered ?

They had no fear for little Grace herself, for though only eight years old she had confessed Jesus as her Saviour, and the change in her was noticeable to all. In writing to his parents, her father said, "I do wish you had seen her lately. Since her conversion she had become quite another child. Her look was more soft, more sweet, more happy."

The time on board ship had been used to her blessing, for it had been impossible even

for a child not to be struck with the wonderful work that had gone on amongst the crew; and she too gave her heart to Jesus at this time. From then onward there was an even closer link between her and her father, and busy as he was he still found time for his children. For many years he carried in his pocket-book the first letter she ever wrote him, when he was away on one of his journeys: "Dear Papa, I hope God has helped you to do what you wanted, and that you will soon come back. I have a nice bead mat for you when you come home . . . dear, dear Papa."

On the day they had come to the hills, as they were making their way up the steep path from the river to the temple, a way originally made for the pilgrims, little Grace noticed a man making an idol.

"Oh, Papa," she pleaded, "he doesn't know about Jesus, or he would never do it! Won't you tell him?"

There standing on the hill-side with her hand in her father's she listened while he stopped and spoke to the man, telling him of the one God, the Creator, who could not be made with hands, and who loved even those who did not know Him.

Passing on they came to a shady spot and sat down to rest, and with the idol-maker still in their thoughts Mr. Taylor suggested praying for him. They sang a hymn, and then the father asked his little daughter if she would pray first. Writing of it afterwards,

with his sorrow fresh upon him, he said, "She did so, and never had I heard such a prayer. She had seen the man *making an idol*: her heart was full, and she was talking to God on his behalf. The dear child went on and on, pleading that God would have mercy upon the poor Chinese and would strengthen her father to preach to them. I never was so moved by any prayer. My heart was bowed before God. Words fail me to describe it."

They had indeed taken possession of the land, in laying their darling to sleep in its bosom, and their sorrow gave them a link more lasting and more deeply felt than any joy, however great, could have done. Was it an answer to the little child's prayer? or was it the sight of the little body so beautiful in death, from which the spirit had fled, that moved Mr. Duncan, a young Highlander of their party, to launch out by himself, carrying the gospel to the city of Nanking, with the help of a Chinese evangelist? He was not a particularly ready speaker, but he had a love for souls that nothing could quench, and a strength of purpose that would stop at nothing. Determined to learn the language as quickly as possible, for lack of a better teacher he used to go and sit beside a man working at a wash-tub for hours at a time, repeating words and phrases till he knew them by heart, and then verses from the Bible, till at length the Chinaman

himself was won to admiration at his persistence, and later he was won to Christ by his love.

He seemed to be the right kind of man for pioneer work, so with prayers for his safety he set off, accompanied by a servant and Tien-fuh the evangelist. It was with difficulty at first that they could get a lodging anywhere, as the Prefect had heard of his coming and had issued orders to all the inns not to receive him. After many disappointments, however, and weary with searching, they obtained permission to sleep in the Drum Tower attached to a temple, provided they were out all day so that no one should be frightened away by the foreigner. Comfortless as it was, it was at least a footing in the city, and before long the people became used to seeing the tall missionary walking in the streets or perhaps sitting in a tea-shop, and they began to lose their fear of him.

At length a carpenter agreed to let him rent half his upstairs room, and when he had been settled there a little while the persuasive foreigner managed to get possession of half the downstairs room too. It was only a slip of a place, but it opened on to the street and it was easy for inquirers to come in for a talk, and even possible to hold a little service there, so it was something gained.

On first arriving in Nanking Mr. Duncan had sent word to Mr. Taylor of a native

bank there, through which money could be sent to him ; but shortly after it failed, so there was no means of sending supplies except by hand. In no way daunted, for he felt sure the Lord would supply him somehow, he went on his usual way.

"What shall we do," his servant asked, "when all the money has gone ?"

"Do ?" replied Mr. Duncan, "we will trust in the Lord and do good ; so shall we dwell in the land, and verily we shall be fed."

He could have gone back for fresh supplies himself, but he knew that if he once left the city it would be doubly difficult to enter it again, and so he held on, writing to Mr. Taylor to tell him so. Just at this time young Rudland arrived at Hang-chow, to Mr. Taylor's relief, and as he was free he sent him off at once by boat with supplies for Nanking. In the meantime the position was critical, as all Mr. Duncan's money was gone, but now the cook came to his rescue with five dollars he had saved from his wages, and when his master explained that he never borrowed, the reply was, "No, sir ; it is a gift—a gift to the Lord."

Feeling that the man was in earnest he gratefully took the money, and they made it go as far as ever it would ; but even so one morning the cook appeared with the news that there was not enough money for their next meal, and "What shall we do *now* ?" he said.

“Do ? ” replied Mr. Duncan as before, “we will trust in the Lord and do good : so shall we dwell in the land, and verily we shall be fed.” And he passed out to go to the daily preaching.

It was very difficult to understand, thought the servant, the words sounded all right, but would they come true ? and he shook his head doubtfully.

Meanwhile Mr. Rudland was travelling as fast as the boat could bring him on the twelve days’ journey, and all went well until at one point the water was so low that the boat could not proceed. With true Chinese apathy the boatmen explained that in a few days they would probably be able to continue the journey, and until then the foreigner must wait. The urgency of his mission made this impossible, and he felt tempted to wonder why such a dilemma should have been allowed, until upon inquiry he found that by going inland from that point he could reach Nanking four days sooner. It was an uncomfortable journey—sixty miles of bumping along on a springless barrow, but what did that matter with so much at stake ?

That evening on his return from a long day, preaching in different parts of the city, Mr. Duncan was surprised to see his servant running to meet him with a beaming face, shouting, “It is all right, it is all right, Mr. Rudland has come.” And sure enough he

had ; and there was a good hot supper for all of them, and best of all, the promises had *come true*. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE FURNACE FOR GOLD.

**H**AVE you been thinking that missionary life must be rather pleasant after all? True there are discomforts, we would all admit that, but seen at a distance of some thousands of miles, there is a kind of glamour cast over even the petty annoyances of life! Seen close to they are perhaps not so attractive, as the poor young bride fresh from England found when she was being escorted to her new home by Mrs. Taylor. It was her first experience of a native river boat, and as it began to grow dark she saw to her horror large and repulsive looking cockroaches creeping up from the cracks in the boards. She was no coward, as subsequent events shewed, but she had always had a great horror of such creatures, and when she saw Mrs. Taylor calmly preparing to lie down and go to sleep, she exclaimed, "Oh, Mrs. Taylor, I really cannot go to bed with all these cockroaches about!" The mere thought that the creatures might crawl over her as she slept was more than she could bear, and she felt she would rather sit up all night, till the gentle sweet voice of Mrs.



Taylor, carrying with it a world of reassuring love, interposed, "Dear child," she said, "if God spares you to work in China you will have many nights like this, and you will not be able to afford to lose your sleep. Can you not lie down quietly, and trust Him to keep you? I should advise you to." The lesson so taught and the trustful example set was one never forgotten by the young missionary, who proved her worth in many more dangerous, through perhaps not to her more trying circumstances.

Have you been thinking that you would like to do something for Jesus, and that you would not even mind putting up with discomforts? Well, it is not necessary to go to China to find work for Jesus, or to suffer discomforts for Him either. We shall soon find them if we speak a word for Jesus, perhaps in the jeers of our school-fellows, or maybe the sneer of our next-door neighbour; but should we not like to be like the young bride, and trust the Lord to keep us! He is well able to do so, as we shall find if we put Him to the test.

Now that the work in Hang-chow was on a settled basis, and the little outstations in various directions were going on satisfactorily, it seemed time for a move forward into hitherto unoccupied districts. From time to time fresh helpers had come from England, speeded on their way by Mr. and Mrs. Berger, who still took the greatest interest in the work

and helped in many ways, but most of all with their prayers and helpful counsel, so that it would not be difficult to spare missionaries for the forward move that had for a long time been in their minds. It is the usual custom to put the most tried and seasoned soldiers at the point of greatest danger, so we shall not be surprised to find that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor proposed moving on themselves, and the point chosen was the city of Yang-chow, to the north, situated on the Grand Canal near to the Yangtze River. This was an important centre and easy of access by boat from Shanghai, so that it was felt to be a suitable place for a new start, from which they hoped to open up fresh country.

The position of foreigners in China was a very different one at this time from what it had been in the days of Mr. Taylor's first arrival from England. Then Europeans were only allowed to settle in the five treaty ports, and even travelling inland was discouraged, though at times it was possible, as we know from the early journeys undertaken by Mr. Taylor in company with other missionaries. Now, however, by reason of her greater power, the British government had forced the Chinese to allow British subjects to travel in the interior for purposes of trade, and even to settle there under government protection. True there were disturbances at times and indignities paid to those who took advantage of these concessions, but satis-

faction was demanded by the British Consul and enforced by the presence of the British fleet kept in Chinese waters.

Where traders might go surely missionaries might reasonably hope to gain an entrance, though for them the problem was rather a different one, as they did not wish to live in any foreign settlement, but right among the people, and here the difficulty of renting possible buildings always had to be considered. Still, with all this in view, we find Mr. and Mrs. Taylor with their three little boys and baby girl, accompanied by their English nurse and Miss Blatchley, on board a native house-boat making their way north by way of the Grand Canal during the spring of 1868.

The children were getting over whooping-cough, and it was a delightful change to be away from the city for a time, afloat on the water in the midst of all the beauties of the country. How wonderful the springtime was, with all the fruit-trees in the district through which they were passing in full bloom, and how restful it all was after the noise and confinement of the city.

And how friendly the people were with whom they came in contact in similar boats making their way along the canal. They had many opportunities of speaking to those they met, who were attracted by the family party and would listen eagerly to the gospel story.

On one occasion the little boys spinning their tops, which were quite unknown toys in China, caused quite a diversion, and proved the means of winning them an invitation on board a mandarin's boat which lay alongside. Here they were treated very kindly and offered tea and eggs, and Mrs. Taylor had an opportunity of putting the gospel clearly before the mandarin's wife, who later in the day called upon her in their boat.

It was a journey of four weeks, and towards the end of the time there was incessant heavy rain that proved to be very trying, as their boat was decidedly leaky, and it was hard to have to keep the children in the cabin all the time. So it was a great relief to reach their destination, and (a hitherto unmet blessing) to be received willingly into a native inn, which offered them the whole of its upper story for their accommodation. During the rainy season this was a great blessing, as it lessened the risk of malaria, which was an ever-present danger. It was only a temporary arrangement, but they could stay till more permanent quarters were obtained, and Mr. Taylor took the precaution of calling upon the mandarin to notify his presence in the city, so that there should be no risk of trouble to the innkeeper.

So far all had gone well, and the people seemed friendly and interested in the little family that had suddenly appeared in their

midst, and with negotiations already on hand for a house they felt that the Lord had indeed gone before them. But Yang-chow was not to be won for Christ without suffering and sacrifice, and on reading the story one is tempted to wonder why God did not come in and spare His children the troubles and dangers through which they had to pass. But He orders all things well, and it may have been that it was necessary for those people of Yang-chow to see the effects of the constraining love of Christ in their midst; it may have been that Satan would not allow an invasion into his kingdom in that region, without a struggle; or it may have been that the loving Father was taking His children by the hand and was saying, "How far will you go with Me? how far will you trust Me?" But the story of their faith and quiet trust in the face of almost certain death comes to us out of the distance as a challenge as to how far we trust our Father, and how much we have risked for His sake.

Shortly after their arrival at the inn one of the servants was taken ill with what was thought to be smallpox; and as little Maria had not been vaccinated and was still far from strong as the effects of whooping-cough, it seemed safest to take her straight to Shanghai and get it done without delay. Mr. Duncan's fiancée, who would be arriving from England shortly, would have to be met there, and

Mrs. Taylor could do the two things together, so it seemed best for her to go at once, leaving a friend, Miss Blatchley, in charge of the rest of the family.

After she had left Yang-chow one after another the children left behind went down with measles, the youngest being so ill that they were seriously anxious, and yet thankful that the baby had left before it developed, and that Mrs. Taylor was spared the anxiety of knowing the position. She, however, was in equal trouble in Shanghai, for after being vaccinated successfully on their arrival in the city, the baby too developed measles, and was very ill. With her arm in a terrible condition, and fighting a bad attack of measles, for some days the little one's life was despaired of, and Mrs. Taylor feared she would lose her second little daughter, enfeebled as she was after whooping-cough. But the loving Father did not put this sorrow upon the mother's heart, and before long little Maria began to recover, and news was coming from Yang-chow that the boys were through the worst.

What a comfort it was at this time to be in the friendly atmosphere of Mr. Gamble's house while waiting for the *Hindustan*, in which the expected traveller was to arrive. The vessel was very much delayed, and week after week went by till the baby was well enough to travel, but still there was no news of its arrival. Then one day Mrs. Taylor

received a short pencilled note from her husband, in which he mentioned that he was feeling very ill, and the shaky handwriting, so unlike his usual style, filled her with alarm, as to what fresh trouble might have developed. As Mr. McCarthy had just arrived in Shanghai and could wait for the long over-due ship and conduct the lady to her intended husband, she felt she must delay no longer, though had all been well she had intended going on to Ning-po. Engaging a native boat to take her back to Yang-chow, as there was no river steamer available that day, they pressed on without delay, for Mrs. Taylor was filled with a terror that she hardly dared to name. Suppose her husband should be seriously ill and they had not let her know! Her heart was in Yang-chow, but oh, how slowly the boat went! Gladly would she have flown to her destination had such a thing been possible; but as it was she could only urge the leisurely boatman to his greatest speed. And when he was forced to rest for sleep or food she herself took the oar and kept the boat on the move to avoid unnecessary delay. "Strange people these foreigners!" was the boatman's unspoken comment, "and a lady too! such unusual haste, and all for a sick one!"

How thankful she was at last to reach her loved ones, and find that her fears had been groundless, for Mr. Taylor was on the mend and the children well; and the family had

moved into the new house that was to be their home in Yang-chow. The people seemed friendly enough and the house was filled with callers all day long, but there was excitement in the district and certain anti-foreign bills had been fixed up near their doors, while Mr. Taylor had received anonymous letters advising him to use caution, as there was to be trouble.

Mr. Reid came in from Nanking and Mr. and Mrs. Rudland from Chin-kiang near by, and a few days later they were glad to see Mr. Duncan arrive; for by this time the house was almost in a state of siege, with a mob of the lowest class of people constantly round the doors. Mr. Taylor was only just beginning to get about, but he frequently went down and addressed the people and tried to calm the excitement; and while things were at their worst the men of the party stayed by the gate to prevent the rabble battering it in, while the women inside were praying to the Father who knew of their danger and in whom was all their trust. After several days of excitement things seemed to calm down, for heavy rain had fallen, and that always has the effect of sending a Chinese crowd home; and there was no risk of having the house burnt over their heads while the rain was coming down in torrents, so from Wednesday to Saturday they had a little respite and were able to rest, hoping that all the trouble was over.



Before the end of the week, however, it all started over again worse than ever, for there was a report circulated that twenty-four children were missing, stolen by the foreigners. Under cover of darkness on Saturday night Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duncan fought their way through the crowded streets to the mandarin's house to ask for help, as an infuriated mob was even then battering at the door of their house, threatening to burn it down and kill all the foreigners. In the mission-house Mrs. Reid and Mr. Rudland were bravely holding the door, while Mrs. Taylor gathered all the household together to her room for prayer. Writing about that time afterwards to her dear friend Mrs. Berger, she said, "I do not know that the throne of grace ever seemed so near to me as that night and the following morning. Not that the closeness of communion with God was greater than at any other time; but I felt able in an especial manner to lay hold of God's strength. And earnestly did we plead with Him to raise as it were a wall of fire around my dear husband and Mr. Duncan, and to give His angels to encamp round about them. I specially needed His sustaining grace to keep me quiet and calm, and to give me soundness of judgment, that no rash step might be taken, for naturally all looked to me to say what was to be done."

That her prayer for personal grace was

answered there is no doubt, for through all the terrible hours with her children all round her, not knowing what might come any moment, and not knowing even if her husband had been torn in pieces by the mob, she was kept outwardly in perfect calm and able to give directions ; while she saved Mr. Rudland's life by her presence of mind and the beautiful Chinese she spoke, that changed the purpose of the would-be murderer. When the door gave way before the mob, it became evident that they would have to leave, and a friendly innkeeper next door took all the party in and hid them.

Mr. Reid's eye was severely injured by a brick thrown at him ; and Mrs. Taylor and Miss Blatchley were both hurt after jumping from the verandah roof and were much bruised and cut ; but the children were safe, though they dared not let them sleep for fear of having to flee again.

"Mamma," said one of the little boys, "where shall we sleep to-night, as they have burnt up our bed ?"

She assured them that God would give them somewhere to sleep, and seeing their mother so calm and trusting in God, what need was there for them to be afraid ?

In the meantime Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duncan had reached the mandarin's house just as the gate was closing for the night, but so great was the pressure of the mob that they were pushed inside before it could

be shut, and rushing to the judgment hall they gave the usual native cry for help, that the mandarin is bound to answer night or day—"Save life, save life ! "

In an agony of impatience, for they could hear the yells of the mob round their house even at that distance, they waited three quarters of an hour till the mandarin was ready to receive them.

When at last they were admitted to his presence, he seemed more anxious to hear what they really *did* with the stolen babies, and had they brought them and for how much ? than to listen to an appeal for help. He then began to discuss the cause of the rioting ; and there was still further delay before Mr. Taylor could persuade him to send help to safeguard his loved ones, if any of them should still be left alive.

At length they were told to remain there while soldiers were sent to quiet the people, and if possible prevent the plundering of the house ; and for two hours the missionaries were kept in suspense, not knowing what was happening. Finally, the soldiers returned reporting that all was quiet, but that the foreigners were all killed and the house sacked ; and Mr. Taylor was told that he and Mr. Duncan could now return under escort if they liked, as the premises were guarded by soldiers. It was some time before they discovered where the mission party had taken refuge, but great was the

rejoicing when they found that all were alive, and that it was safe to return to their own home, which had been plundered but not burnt down. So the children were able to sleep in their own beds after all, and in spite of wounds and bruises and weariness it was with thankfulness that they offered praise to the Father who had kept them.

The next morning the mandarin came and insisted upon the foreigners leaving the city for a time while their house was repaired and peace restored in the city.

The little party of missionaries was warmly received at Chin-kiang near by, room being found for them in the foreign settlement; and though most of their possessions were destroyed, their valuable papers had not been touched and their money had not been stolen, so they had much to be thankful for. Here they remained for three months, till things had quieted down and they had permission to return, for it had never occurred to them but that they would return.

The people of Yang-chow could not but be touched that after all that had happened Mr. and Mrs. Taylor should again trust their children in the city, and when shortly after their return a fourth son was born, all the Chinese neighbours called to offer their congratulations, which paved the way for a more friendly understanding.

That a work was really started in the city was evident, as the innkeeper and two others

who had helped them during the riot all came to the mission-house regularly as inquirers, and before long were seeking baptism. A year later Miss Blatchley wrote: "The Lord is greatly working in this city. The converts here are different from any others we have known in China. There is such life, warmth, earnestness about them."

So it had all been worth while. As Mr. Taylor wrote a few years later at a time of much pressure: "If we are purified, at times, as in a furnace, it is not merely for earthly service, it is for eternity. May we so appreciate the plans of the Master that we can triumphantly glory in the love that subjects us to such discipline, though the discipline itself be sharp and to the flesh hard to bear. . . . Our profession of looking to and of confidence in Him must not be a vain one, then it will not be put to shame."

"Lo, from the suffering and loss  
 Eternal flowers are growing,  
 And ever from the Saviour's cross  
 The living streams are flowing.  
 Oh, heart, thy risen Lord adore;  
 Behold He liveth evermore!"

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE PLACE IS TOO STRAIT FOR ME.

**E**ARLY in the year 1870 it became clear that the elder children could no longer be kept in China. The third boy, Samuel, had been shewing signs of increasing delicacy and it was doubtful if he could remain another summer, so it was thought best that the three boys and their little sister should go to England in charge of Miss Blatchley, who was devoted to them, leaving only the baby boy born in Yang-chow with the parents.

At first it had seemed that Mrs. Taylor would have to go with the children, but when Miss Blatchley volunteered to go in her place they thankfully accepted her offer, for she was devoted to the children and they to her, and no one could so well supply the place of the absent parents as one who had lived with them so long and had been almost like a daughter to them. She on her part was glad to be able to take the responsibility, and free her beloved friend for the work to which she was so wonderfully fitted.

The time for parting came all too soon, and as the weeks wore on they were in-

creasingly anxious about their five-year-old Samuel, who was really ill when the day came for leaving Yang-chow. Watching tenderly by his side through the long night, the parents realised that the parting was to be a longer one than they had anticipated, for their darling child for whom they had so often feared was to be taken to a better land than England. He was to be spared the parting he so much dreaded, for the Shepherd gathered the little lamb to his bosom and took him gently, while in a deep sleep, from the little cabin and the arms of his dear ones, to the home above where "there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying."

So it was in the little cemetery at Chin-kiang that they left all that remained on earth of their darling child, and then continued their journey to Shanghai with the others. There was no need now to be anxious or fearful for the one who had gone, but how hard to part with those that were left, whom they might not see again for years. Yet the parting was not for their own pleasure or even for the sake of business, but because of the great work in which they were engaged. Mr. Taylor wrote, "It is His work, not mine nor yours; and yet it is ours—not because we are engaged in it, but because we are His and one with Him whose work it is." Had it been man's work it could never have continued in the face of all the opposition that

met it from time to time, but just because it was God's work and could not fail, opposition only served to bring out the faithfulness of the loving Father who could keep His servants, weak vessels though they were, in the face of unsurpassed difficulties.

Four months later Mr. Taylor had to face the heaviest of all human sorrows, when his beloved wife, after an attack of cholera, from which she appeared to be recovering, unexpectedly sank and fell asleep on July 23rd, 1870.

Writing of the end, Mrs. Duncan, who was with them, said: "I never witnessed such a scene. As dear Mrs. Taylor was breathing her last Mr. Taylor knelt down—his heart so full—and committed her to the Lord; thanking Him for having given her, and for the twelve-and-a-half years of happiness they had had together; thanking Him, too, for taking her to His own blessed presence, and solemnly dedicating himself anew to His service." Even in such a time of sorrow he could still hold himself at the absolute disposal of the One whose he was, and whom he served, and could write: "He, and He only, knew what my dear wife was to me. He knew how the light of my eyes and the joy of my heart were in her. . . . But He saw that it was good to take her; good indeed for her, and in His love He took her painlessly; and not less good for me, who must henceforth toil and suffer alone—yet



not alone, for God is nearer to me than ever. And now I have to tell Him all my sorrows and difficulties, as I used to tell dear Maria ; and as she cannot join me in intercession, to rest in the knowledge of Jesus' intercession ; to walk a little less by feeling, a little less by sight, a little more by faith."

If the Father had taken his dear one, it was not so as to leave him desolate, but so that he might be even more cast on Him for everything. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "Who does not thirst ? Who has not mind-thirsts, or heart-thirsts, soul-thirsts or body-thirsts ?" he would say ; "Well, no matter which, or whether I have them all—'Come unto me and'—remain thirsty ? Ah, no ! 'Come unto me and drink.'"

The Yangtze River was an illustration that he often used. "In times of drought," he used to say, "brooks may dry up, they often do ; canals may be pumped dry, they often are, but the Yangtze *never*. Always a mighty stream ; always flowing, deep and irresistible !" That is like the resources we have in God, for they are never failing. And for us it is not enough to take one hasty drink, but we need to come and come again, and be ever drinking of the life-giving stream. So shall we never be found thirsty.

\* \* \* \*

And now Hudson Taylor was freer than

ever before to devote himself to the needs of those around him ; not that the home circle had ever stood between him and his work, but he no longer had an anchor to keep him to any one place, and was free to move about, giving help where it was needed, advising as to opening up new stations in hitherto unreachd districts, doctoring the sick, establishing new converts, and never sparing or even considering himself. No wonder those who worked with him loved him ! For whatever they might have to put up with in the course of the Master's work, they knew that Mr. Taylor had suffered just as much, and was willing to do so again at any time in such a cause.

We have an interesting account given by one young missionary who, arriving fresh from England with a party of others, was met by Mr. Taylor himself. Of course he was in Chinese dress, and as it was winter was so muffled up that it was difficult to recognise in the hooded figure the Englishman they were expecting to meet them. After seeing the ladies of the party off under escort to the foreign settlement, where he had arranged for them to be put up, he politely invited the two young men to accompany him "to his hotel." They, nothing suspecting, willingly followed him towards the Chinese part of the city, where their unaccustomed noses were assailed by the horrible stench from heaps of rotting fish,

vegetables and refuse of all sorts which lay year in, year out, by the roadside. Through the crowded streets they went, till turning up a side road their guide stopped at the door of a native post office. Through the shop they went and up a pitch dark, narrow staircase till they came to a door, which on being opened revealed the "hotel." It was a bare room about twelve feet square with a raised dais along one side covered with a native quilt. In the centre of the room was a square table, a skin-covered box, and a native food-basket, which things were dimly seen, for the window opening on to the street below was plastered with grimy paper in the absence of any glass.

Mr. Taylor courteously told the young men to sit down, and after hearing an account of their voyage, he opened his Bible and read the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel, and then followed it with a prayer for them both that left a great impression on their minds. He then asked if they would care to wash before having breakfast, and as there was no sign of any washstand in the room, they thanked him, greatly wondering. Going to the door he gave a Chinese call which was answered by his servant, who went to a basket, taking out a wooden bowl and a piece of cloth, and then disappeared downstairs.

Presently he reappeared with a bowlful of hot water which he put on the table, and

dipping in the cloth he wrung it out and gave it to his master. After well rubbing over his hands and face Mr. Taylor again dipped the cloth in the water, wringing it drier, and repeated the process, closely watched by his guests, who then proceeded to do the same.

Next they were led to a cook-shop for breakfast, and it was well for them that they had practised the use of chop-sticks on board ship, or they would have found it hard to manage the basins of steaming rice and vegetables topped off with pieces of fat pork that were set before them on a very dirty table.

Such was their introduction to China, but they would not have had it otherwise, for as one of them remarked, "It was plain living and high thinking, and there was no need to worry that one was running up a large hotel bill!" In writing of it he said, "Our leader and director shewed us how to do it by his own example, and stamped us at once, in all the freshness of our early zeal, with his own stamp. Hence we took to Chinese dress, Chinese food, Chinese ways as a duck to water. Personally I can never be thankful enough for that experience."

It was such young men as these who were to do what had so long been dreamt of and prayed over, nothing less than taking the gospel to even the far inland provinces, where no white man had ever been and where

the gospel message had never yet been sounded. It would take a much longer book than this to tell of all the wonders of the work, of all the perils by the way, of all the weariness and heart achings, and withal of the wonderful joys of telling of the love of Jesus and seeing lives transformed and idol-worship abandoned, that led these faithful servants from place to place. But we can get little glimpses from the far-away stations, from whence come stories of self-sacrifice and love that are of no human order, and our hearts burn as we think of what it cost these early pioneers to take the gospel to China.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### TRULY THE LIGHT IS SWEET.

**I**N the city of Cheng-hsien Mr. Stevenson was labouring apparently without much result, but one day there called to see him a learned Confucianist, Mr. Nying by name. He was much interested in science, and possessed translations of European works on the subject that he studied with thought and care, and it was clear he was no ordinary man. Nothing would have been farther from his thoughts than to inquire about the Christian religion, but meeting some difficulty in one of his books he called upon Mr. Stevenson to help him in the matter, and an interesting talk followed.

At length, turning carelessly to the table, Mr. Stevenson picked up a copy of the New Testament, asking him if he had one in his library. He replied that he had, but that it did not interest him, and went on to explain his views on the subject of religion. He thought the existence of a God was doubtful, and even if there were such a Being, he thought He would be far too great and mighty to be interested in the doings of atoms such as men and women in the great

universe of things. He also doubted the existence of the soul, and Mr. Stevenson's talk with him did not seem to make any impression.

So finally, turning to the fire, on which was a boiling kettle, Mr. Stevenson said, "Water and fire are opposing elements, and can never combine; water extinguishes fire, and fire evaporates water. Yet see, while we have been talking the kettle boils and my servant has made us a cup of tea. You say there is no God, and that if there were He would not listen to your prayers, but if you will put it to the test you will find it is not so. If you will go home to-night and take up your Testament, and before opening it earnestly and humbly ask the one true and only God to give you His Holy Spirit, and help you to understand His word, you will find that it is a new book to you and that there is no other book like it in all the world. Prove what I say, and I will pray for you too."

Much impressed, though not convinced, the Confucianist went his way, thinking it very strange that anyone should be so much in earnest over a comparative stranger. Still he determined to see what would happen, and that night he got out the book, still very sceptical that just saying a few words to a God that no one could know anything about, even if He existed, could make a dull book any more interesting. Still, he found himself saying, "O God, if there be a God, save my

soul, if I have a soul. Give me Thy Holy Spirit, and help me to understand this book."

The evening wore on, and Mrs. Nying looking into his study was surprised to find him too engrossed to notice her presence, and when at length she spoke to him, he replied, "Do not wait for me; I have important matters in hand." And he continued reading.

He was indeed finding it a new book, and his doubts were beginning to vanish before the wonderful stories that he read of the Saviour and His love. It was strange that the words seemed to bring life and peace and pardon to him, although he could not but feel himself a sinner as never before. For days he dared not speak of it to his wife, as she came of a very good family, who would utterly disown him if it were known that he was a Christian. At last, however, it could no longer be hid, and he spoke to her of the true God that He had found, so different from the idols in the temples, and of the way of salvation. To his amazement, instead of horror he saw eagerness to hear more in her face, and she said, "Have you really found Him? I have wanted to know for so long." And then she told how years before, during the rebellion, the rebel soldiers had sacked the city where she and her parents lived, burning and destroying everything and killing many people. Terrified, she had hidden in a wardrobe, and as she



heard the soldiers coming into the very room where she was, in her agony of fear she had cried in her heart, "Oh, heavenly Grandfather, save me !"

Ever since that prayer had been answered, for the soldiers did not discover her hiding-place, she had longed to know who it was that had saved her. It could not have been the idols, for they were not even able to save themselves from destruction, so it must have been some other all-powerful God that she did not know of. Who can measure the joy of that husband and wife who found the light together ? And now their one concern was to let others know the story of redeeming love, and the once proud Confucianist went out into the city streets proclaiming the story of God's grace, and attracting others by his very earnestness.

There was the notorious Lao-Kuen, whose wicked and heartless ways were the talk of the place, yet now he was docile and quiet, and his old father, who had been terribly ill-treated in times gone by, bore witness to the wonderful change in his son, and was soon a believer himself. Such things could not but be talked about.

Even more wonderful was the conversion of one who kept a gambling den in a neighbouring town, for his house was cleared of all its disreputable association, and the best room in the place was whitewashed and set apart as a room in which to preach, and

tell others of the love that had sought and found him, and turned him from his evil ways. Other religions might give a man up as hopeless, but it seemed that the religion of Jesus could change even a bad man. Was anything ever so wonderful ?

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In the same district, to the south, at the beginning of 1873, Mr. Taylor was visiting the city of Tai-ping with a view to getting a footing there for the preaching of the gospel, as it had hitherto not been reached. It was market-day, and the streets were literally thronged with people, and Mr. Taylor, like his Master before him, "was moved with compassion" for the multitude, who were "as sheep having no shepherd," so that he was constrained to retire to the city wall and cry to God to have mercy on them and open their hearts.

An old man named Dzing followed him to the boat, and on being invited into the cabin he at once said, "What am I to do with my sins ? Our scholars tell us there is no future state, but I find it hard to believe them."

"Do not believe any such thing," replied Mr. Taylor, "for there is an endless future before everyone of us."

"Some say," went on the old man, "live on vegetable diet. Should I live on a vegetable or a mixed diet ?"

"There is no merit in the one or sin in the

other," replied Mr. Taylor. "Both affect the stomach, not the heart."

"Ah, so it has always seemed to me! It seems to leave the question of sin untouched. Oh, sir! I lie on my bed and think. I sit alone in the daytime and think. I think, and think, and think again: but I cannot tell what is to be done with my sins. I am seventy-two years of age, and I cannot expect to finish another decade. To-day knows not to-morrow's lot, as the saying is; and if true of all, how much more so of me. Can *you* tell me what is to be done about my sins?"

Speaking as simply as he could, Mr. Taylor told him of a living, loving Father who was God and yet had provided a way to remove our sins. It was all so new to him that he could not take it in.

"And what are we to do to recompense such favour, such goodness?" he asked. "I do not see how it is to be recompensed."

When told that it was all free, his poor old mind hardly seemed able to take in the wonder of it, but at length he left the boat to think it over, much comforted by the thought that Mr. Taylor had rented a house and that soon one would come who could tell him more about these wonderful things. At seventy-two the mind moves slowly, and it needs time to grasp the truth, yet the loving Father who had begun the work in him would surely finish it.

One of the two young men, Henry Taylor by name, whom we read of earlier as having been entertained by Mr. Taylor in the native city on his arrival at Shanghai, was in the year 1875 engaged in gospel work in the far-away district of Ho-nan. One of the things that struck him most was the readiness with which the people listened to his words, and the real heart-hunger that he constantly met with in those to whom he spoke. "As we spoke of Jesus and His sufferings for our sins," Henry Taylor wrote, "we saw tears stealing down some faces. The women go in heart and soul for idolatry, as you know, but still find their hearts unsatisfied and their minds in a maze."

Visiting the city of Kai-feng, the capital city of that province, one time he had occasion to change his plans and leave a few days earlier than he had intended. Some months later he learned that after his departure a mob of students had surrounded the inn, having taken an oath to kill the foreigner, and not finding him there, in their anger they tore down the signboard and would have burnt the house had not the authorities interfered in time.

Another time he ran short of money while staying at an inn, and was obliged to send his servant to Hankow for more. After the man had gone the mandarin issued an order that no shop-keeper was to sell anything to the foreigner on pain of the severest punish-

ment. The innkeeper dared no longer supply him, and he had no servant to buy from the shops, so alone in his room he was praying to God to come to his aid, when he heard a stealthy movement at his window. Thinking it was a robber, and probably an armed one, he went to the window, where a man appeared to be trying to get in. Signing to the missionary to be quiet, he pulled out from his girdle a small loaf of bread, rather like a large steamed dumpling, which he handed in through the window. One after another he produced six from the voluminous folds of his garments and then departed without a word. The next night he came again, passing the loaves in as before, but when Mr. Taylor offered him his last remaining coins he shook his head vigorously and whispered, "Not want, not want." He dared not stay for any conversation, but day after day the supply of food was kept up until the return of his servant, when they were able to leave the town. In such ways was the gospel carried from city to city, from town to town, and even from village to village, not without danger and weariness and oftentimes discouragement. But who can measure the joy when he found one who received the word with gladness, such as the old scholar at Ju-ning, who hearing for the first time of the death of Jesus for sins, humbly knelt and prayed that all his sins might be laid upon the Divine Sacrifice, for

who could remain indifferent with *such* a Saviour ?

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In 1878 Mr. David Hill first visited the great inland province of Shansi, which, unknown to him, was to become the centre of one of the most remarkable works of God of that time. It had once been a rich and prosperous agricultural centre, but opium-smoking had become such a curse in the district that it was a well-known saying that ten out of every eleven men were slaves to the habit, and such a condition is bound to bring poverty in its train. Wishing to study the language, Mr. Hill engaged as his teacher a Confucianist scholar, who was also a doctor, a man of high culture and unusual personality named Hsi, and little could he know how this man was to be used in the Lord's service. After his conversion Hsi was enabled by the Lord's help to break off the opium habit, and so greatly did he long to help those around him to free themselves from what he felt to be Satan's chains, that he opened one refuge after another to receive the victims of this demoralising practice and help them to better things. With a deep love for souls and a longing to win them for Christ he always made it clear to his patients that the medicine alone (of which he had received the recipe in answer to prayer) would not conquer the trouble, but that prayer in the name of Jesus could not fail ;

and again and again he had remarkable cures and those whose bodies were healed would go away trusting in Jesus as their Saviour.

On one occasion three old men, all well over sixty and for many years opium-smokers, came to one of the refuges and begged to be taken in. It was in the early days, and Hsi was a little doubtful as to whether they could be helped because of their advanced age, but they were so urgent in their pleadings that he received them. For the first day or two all went well, and they seemed interested in the gospel story and were amenable to the treatment, but by the third day one of the old men was seized with the terrible craving that is usual in such cases, and in an agony he aroused his two sleeping companions in the middle of the night begging them to go for Mr. Hsi or his helper, as he could bear no more, and must have medicine. But the two friends were beginning to grasp things a little and they replied, "It is not medicine you need, why need we call others? Kneel down and let us pray."

Can we picture the scene? Three old men kneeling in prayer to One about whom they had known nothing a few days before. A long narrow cave-room, for the house was built into the hillside, and perhaps a dim light burning, and from the shadows a cry going up to the only One who could help them. Would He hear them, and was He really there, this Saviour they had heard about?

"O Jesus, help me. Save me. Save me now," pleaded the trembling voice; and not in vain, for soon he was able to lie down again in his wadded quilt, his distress relieved, and before long he was quietly sleeping.

"Jesus truly is here," whispered the others to each other before they too fell asleep.

The next morning, with joy they told their story, and though it was no surprise to Mr. Hsi, who was well used to such things, the other patients were helped not a little by the good news that Jesus would hear and answer even *their* prayers.

Some fifty miles to the north of the little village where Mr. and Mrs. Hsi lived, was the large city of Hwo-chow, which was very much on their hearts, as the gospel message had as yet not found any entrance there. Day by day it was mentioned in their prayers, but nothing seemed to come of it, and the city was still in darkness; till one morning Mrs. Hsi said to her husband, "We have prayed much and often for that city, is it not time to *do* something?"

Sadly her husband replied, "But what can we do, for the city is far away, and money is lacking, so we cannot rent a house there?" On inquiring how much would be needed, she was told, "Thirty thousand cash," after which she said no more, for she knew that long ago all that they had possessed had gone for the Lord's work. Perhaps she was staggered at the amount, or perhaps she was



only thinking, for she was a resourceful little lady, and she could not forget Hwo-chow.

The next morning she came to her husband with a beaming face and laying a parcel beside him she said, "I think perhaps the Lord has answered our prayers."

Looking at her in surprise, he noticed something different about her appearance, and taking off the wrappings of the parcel disclosed—all her gold and silver ornaments, rings, bracelets, hair-pins, earrings, none were missing. All the jewellery that marks the distinguished position of a Chinese lady, almost her respectability, all was there, her husband's wedding-gift; while she replied gladly to his half remonstrances, "I can do without these; let Hwo-chow have the gospel."

On being asked later if she did not miss her beautiful things, she replied without hesitation, "Miss them? Why, I have Jesus, is not He enough?"

\* \* \* \*

But it was not only men who braved the perils of pioneer work in the interior, for we hear of lady missionaries, even *unmarried* ladies holding stations that were many days journey from the nearest treaty port.

Like a gem in a beautiful setting comes the story of two lady missionaries settled in a lonely hill district in the province of Szechwau, during the riots and upheaval of 1895. Many of the missionaries had to fly

for protection to the nearest ya-men, but they were able to quietly stay on and continue their work. Night after night their house was guarded not only by angels, but also by Chinese Christians, who watched to see that no harm came to them, though the ladies themselves were unaware of the fact.

So great was the love that they inspired that during this troubled time, having heard a report of the English ladies, though never having met them, a Chinese lady of rank hobbled twenty miles on her poor little bandaged feet to assure herself that they had not been harmed. Touched by such an instance of thought for their welfare, we can imagine what a joy it would be to the English ladies to tell of the loving Father who was protecting them, and of the Saviour who had suffered for all and who had even at that time made it possible for her to hear the gospel story for the first time. It is an old story, but ever new, and before she made her long journey home again she knew Jesus as her Saviour and was rejoicing in His love. From that time onward she frequently walked to the mission-house for the Sunday service, leaving home on Saturday morning so as to be sure of being in good time.

On one occasion she was hindered from leaving in the morning and so had to set off by herself in the evening. The neighbours tried to hinder her from going that long,

lonely mountain walk at night, for they knew well that many brigands were about and that there would be hungry wolves on the prowl. But no arguments could turn her from her purpose.

"I am not afraid," she said, "I shall not be alone, for Jesus is with me, and could I have any better protector?" Telling the story afterwards she said, "I sang hymns by the way and was not afraid."

\* \* \* \*

Far away to the North-West, almost into Tibet (so far, indeed, that we cannot include it in our map), was another little band of missionaries settled in the city of Si-ning. It was a Chinese city, but many Moham-medans lived in the district, and the day came when they swept the countryside with their rebel armies, destroying, burning and killing all who came within their reach. Fugitive men, women and children from the villages round fled to Si-ning, many of them severely wounded or burnt, and all in a half-starved and terrified condition. They were herded in a Confucian temple with none to help or care for their terrible state, for no one would even give them food or water.

How can one picture the sight that met the missionaries' gaze when first they were led to the temple by one who knew the healing power of their medicines and the tenderness of their hearts? Neither Mr. Hall nor Mr.

Ridley were doctors, and Mrs. Ridley was not a trained nurse even, yet in common humanity they had to do their best, for there was no one else to help. Quickly exhausting their own supply of dressings, they had to buy cotton wool and oil for the burns in the city, while they even performed operations with no other instruments than a penknife and a razor, extracting bullets and doing all in their power to ease the sufferers.

With the Mohammedan hordes besieging the city and constant fighting for seven months, they had a continuous stream of patients, all of whom they tended, whether Chinese or Mohammedan, doing what they could for both body and soul. It was a fearful time, but seeing how much they were needed in the city, they realised why it was that they had been led to stay there, when they might have escaped eastward in the early stages of the outbreak. To Mrs. Ridley, with her baby girl to tend and all the work of preparing food for the family, for the servants left the house at the beginning of the siege, it must have been a test of faith as well as bodily strength, but then the neighbours were so kind and helpful, and that made up for much. One neighbour sent in money to buy medical supplies, another frequently sent in batches of bread, and a third invited Mrs. Ridley in to meals whenever she could go, for everyone knew she had no time for proper cooking.

Backwards and forwards she would go on her little donkey between her home and the improvised hospital, for many of the cases being women and girls, only she could tend them, so her time was fully occupied; and when at length the needs of her baby called her back, a passage through the crowded streets was always quickly cleared that she might not be hindered, for all were beginning to know and appreciate the self-sacrificing love that kept the missionaries busy all day, and often half the night too.

All this time no supplies or money had been able to reach them, and their friends were in great anxiety as to their fate, for they had no means of knowing even whether they were dead or alive, but the Father was caring for them and did not forget their needs in that far-away city. Surely, we might think, it would have been a case for "the ravens" of which Mr. Taylor had spoken so many years before! But no, God was able to use other means to keep them supplied through two long years before communication with other parts of the country was again established.

Just before the beginning of the siege a case of all kinds of tinned goods arrived from England, which helped them for a long time, and when food began to get scarce they realised the blessing of having no servants to feed. Still, careful as they were, their supplies could not last for ever, and

soon the flour began to get low, and even if they had had money it would have been difficult to buy more, for the city was getting short of food and only the rich could buy wheat to be ground into flour, though many had private stores. It was an anxious moment, but they had a rich Father, as Mr. Taylor often used to say, and they made known to Him their need, though they could not tell others.

One day an official called to see Mr. Ridley, and as he was alone in the house he had to apologise as best he could for the poorness of his entertainment, and light the fire to make tea, for in China then, as now, nothing could be done without tea-drinking, even if it was only hot water, as it frequently was in the poorer districts. Politeness made the visitor refrain from shewing surprise, but on leaving he went immediately to the mandarin and told the astonishing news that the foreigners who were helping everyone else had no servants to wait on them.

Shortly afterwards four soldiers appeared, saying that they had been sent to serve the foreigners in the capacity of servants, to tend their animals and wait upon them. It was an embarrassing moment, and Mr. Ridley was obliged to explain that they must decline the honour as they really had not food enough in the house to feed four extra mouths. The next day two soldiers appeared, each carrying a sack of wheat, which they put

down before the door, saying that the mandarin had sent it as a gift to shew his gratitude for all they were doing. Soon after two more men appeared, and they, shouldering the sacks, carried the wheat off to the mill to be ground, presently bringing it back as flour to the mission-house. Here was a store indeed, and brought to their door without their making their need known to anyone but their Father. How their hearts were warmed as they thought of His loving care and the sweet promise, "Verily, they *shall* be fed." Before they had had time to finish the supply six more soldiers appeared, as before each carrying his sack, which in due course was ground into flour.

With six hundred pounds of flour they were in a position not only to feed their own family but to help some of the starving people around them and share their blessings with others.

Through all the terrible time their baby kept in radiant health, though diphtheria raged through the city, and Mr. Ridley went down with it. In spite of everything she flourished and was so good and happy that she cheered even the saddest days and chased away depression; though looking at her happy smiling face the mother could not but shudder at times to think of what might happen should the city be taken by the rebels. For well she knew that those heathen soldiers spared neither women nor children, for had

she not seen babies no older than her own that had been mutilated and hurt by the savages that knew no mercy or pity.

But they were kept in peace of heart, this little band of the Lord's servants, and found opportunities of telling their message such as had never been before ; for when men are sick or sorrowful they will gladly listen to the gospel story and find comfort in the thought of One who loves and suffered too.

When the city was at last relieved in 1896, an even more terrible period of retaliation on the Mohammedan population harrowed the feelings of the little missionary band, but God gave them strength to bear all the terrible sights and courage to face all difficulties, and if we cannot speak of great results, the world to come may reveal many a soul harvested at this time of sorrow that will earn the Master's, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

There can be no lessons like those learned in sorrow, and very little that is really worth while is achieved without heart-break and weeping, and so we hear a story of sorrow in the little station at Wenchow during the same time as the siege of Si-ning. An outbreak of cholera occurred, carrying off nine from the mission-house. The missionaries, risking all for the sake of the little band of converts, and the even more needy heathen who were dying around them, worked till



the last—three out of the four found faithful unto death. Of the fourth it is not easy to write. She had toiled amid the dying, had buried her baby boy and her husband, and then her two friends and colleagues, and she alone was left to tell the tale. It would have been so easy for Jesus to take her too, but she was left to shew others what her Lord could be to her at such a time.

In writing to Mr. Taylor to tell him, her great concern was for the grief he would feel at the news, and so sustained was she that she could write: "Dear Mr. Taylor, God has taken His workmen, but He will carry on His work. I do not know what He has in store for me, but I do know that He will guide the future as He has the past. . . . He has indeed emptied me! May it be only to fill with His love, compassion and power."

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### WHEN THE BUD IS PERFECT.

**M**ANY more stories might be told of the courage, love and self-sacrifice of those who risked their lives, and indeed their all, to take the gospel message to those who otherwise could never hear it. During the terrible "Boxer Rising" in 1900, when there was a widespread movement all through the country to get rid of the foreigners, many of the missionaries and their wives and even little children lost their lives. In many places the native Christians at great risk to themselves protected their missionary friends, hiding them, and eventually succeeded in getting them safely away. We read of miraculous escapes and the protecting power of God's hand in positions of great danger; while the courage and simple faith shewn by God's servants under the most terrible circumstances would fill us with amazement did we not know something of the God in whom they trusted, and were not disappointed.

When the rebellion was at an end, on every hand the great desire was, on the part of

these faithful servants, to go back to the very districts from which they had been cast out and tell again of the love of Jesus and prove that their own love was unaltered by all that had happened. Is there any parallel to such glorious heroism, but in the One who said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"? The missionaries were cheered to find in many places that, in spite of the tremendous upheaval, most of the Chinese Christians had stood firm and carried on the work, and in some places there had even been fresh interest shewn, so that they were received back with joy by those little bands of converts who had so sadly mourned over their absence. For in most parts the newly converted Chinese were still very dependent on their European friends and teachers, as they were still but babes in the truth.

It had always been Mr. Taylor's belief that it would only be necessary to take the gospel into the country and to scatter it far and wide, and that then the native converts, led by the Spirit of God, would do the rest towards evangelising their countrymen. He looked upon the missionaries as merely temporary scaffolding, to support the building in the early stages until it could stand alone; but it was his dream that there would arise from among the Chinese themselves such men as Hsi of Shansi, devoted and Spirit-filled, who would under God's hand be fitted to

act as pastors, teachers and evangelists to their own countrypeople.

The massacres and persecutions of 1900, far from stamping out the Christian religion in China and getting rid of the foreigner, only made the flame burn the brighter and served to shew up the true gold in all its worth by comparison with all the surrounding dross of heathendom. When peace was restored and the missionaries were able to return to their posts, they found an open door for the gospel such as they had never before met with, and a readiness to hear the word of God and receive it with gladness unlike anything known before the Boxer rising.

That this condition of affairs has continued in varying degree right up to our own day there is ample proof. Quite recently a medical missionary in charge of one of the largest hospitals in China said that during many years of work in that country he had never known such an ear for the gospel message as is found among the Chinese of the present day. In his own hospital he estimated that ninety per cent. of the patients who came for treatment were truly converted before they left to return to their homes ; and that not through the instrumentality of the doctors, but as a result of the devoted ministrations and faithful preaching of the Chinese nurses in charge of the wards.

Most of us will have to own that we have in the past very much under-

estimated the work that the Lord was doing in China. We have perhaps been ignorant that He was moving there at all in any marked degree, and we may even have thought in our hearts that now it is not the day of the heathen. But if our vision is narrow, we can praise God that His thoughts are all-embracing and His arm is not shortened that it cannot save. If He has put an earnest longing for souls into the hearts of any of His people He will abundantly respond to that longing above all that we ask or think; and as news comes to us from time to time from China we cannot but see an answer such as even Mr. Taylor himself can hardly have foreseen, "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over . . . for with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

*Mr. Watchman  
Nee →* Some ten or twelve years ago in one of the universities of Southern China there was a young Christian student connected with one of the local missionary centres; but being a man of unusual intelligence and of a thoughtful turn, there were many things that puzzled him. It has often been a difficulty for converts in a heathen land to discover that there are so many sects and systems in Christianity, all of which differ in some particulars in their manner of worship and the form of their beliefs. Yet they are all Christians, at any rate nominally, they have the same Bible as their guide, the same Jesus as their Saviour.

No wonder they are puzzled and perplexed, and ask themselves what it can all mean.

This young student was greatly troubled in his mind by all that he saw, and for two long years in secret he sought the solution to all his difficulties. He was a true believer in the Lord Jesus and knew himself to be pardoned and saved, but in his heart he often wondered if there were not something more. It seemed to him that there *must* be, yet how or where could he find it? All this time, though he longed to do so he had refrained from taking the Lord's supper, because he felt unhappy about the way things were done in the mission to which he was attached. It was very obvious that some of those who were regular communicants were only Christians in name, and had never themselves experienced any change of heart or come out and boldly confessed Jesus as their Saviour.

By this time a new generation had arisen. There were those who had been the children of Christian parents and had been brought up in the faith instead of as idolaters, yet some of them were only nominal Christians, and went through the orthodox rites of their church much in the same way as they would have attended their heathen ceremonies had they been Buddhists or Confucianists. To the young man this seemed altogether out of keeping with what he found in his Bible, and yet to keep aloof and stand in an isolated position was becoming intolerable to him.

So great was the burden on his spirit that at last he could endure it no longer, and he determined to go to one of his friends and speak of his difficulties and ease his mind of the weight that troubled him. To his surprise, he had no sooner explained the purpose of his visit and the troubles that weighed on his mind than his friend, throwing his arms round him embraced him fervently, exclaiming, "My wife and I have had the very same difficulty, and only just now we have been wondering whether we two could break bread together in our house, but now you will be able to join us."

Somewhat taken aback by this very unexpected suggestion, the young student said that he should like to pray about the matter and think it over before deciding on so unusual a step, for neither of the men had ever before heard of such a thing as a communion service being conducted without either a clergyman or minister of some kind to administer the sacraments.

A few days went by and then the student again went to see his friend, and his first words were, "Brother, I see it, for reading in the Acts of the Apostles I see it is not necessary to have a minister for the breaking of bread." And so it came about that the next Lord's day the little company of three Christians—two brothers and a sister—met together in a private house to remember the Lord in His death, just in the simple way

that the disciples of old called their Lord to mind in the breaking of bread. It was a wonderful time for each one of them, and they felt the presence of the Lord with them as never before. One brother gave thanks for the loaf and broke it, and they all ate of it; and then the other brother gave thanks for the cup, and they drank of it, passing it one to another. So full were their hearts and overflowing with joy and wonder of their new sense of nearness to the Lord and the thought of all that He had done for them that they could only sit down and weep; and that was the end of their first meeting.

After this, week by week they met together as opportunity offered for the same purpose, and they were utterly ignorant that there were any others anywhere in the world who met as they did. It was not long, however, before they wanted to share their good times with others, and in the university quite a stir was made by the strange talk of the young student, who seemed aglow with happiness, and to have some secret joy outside himself. Talking it over together, the three friends realised that they themselves could only speak to a few of their new-found joy, and they longed that the good news should go further afield. If only they had money they could print a tract and distribute it far and wide, and thus speak to many who would otherwise be



quite beyond their reach ; but then they were only poor men, and where was the money to come from ?

Recognising that if it were the Lord's will He could easily provide them with money for this purpose, they began to meet together to pray that in some way the money might come to them. For some weeks they prayed regularly with much earnestness, but still no answer came, until at last one day the student said, "We are praying for money, but where is our material, for we have not yet written a tract. Let us then write a tract and then we can go to the Lord and say, Here is the material, Lord, now where is the money ? "

This seemed to them the right way to proceed, and before long the tract was written and approved, and they then began to pray again that means might be provided to print and send it out. At the close of their prayers one day, they had only just risen from their knees, when a knock was heard at the door. On opening it they were surprised to see a Christian acquaintance, who said she had come for advice, as she felt the Lord had been for some time past speaking to her as to her money and the uses to which she put it, and that she wished to devote some to the Lord's work, but did not know how to proceed.

It was a tense moment. Here was the **very** money for which they had been praying, and they had but to breathe the word for it

to be theirs ! But suppose the Lord had other uses for that money, and He intended to provide for their tract from another quarter ? This was quite possible, so the student said nothing about the purpose of their being gathered together or of their prayers. Instead, he began to speak of the tithes of the Israelites, and how they were asked to give one tenth of all their living for God's service. In Christianity, he went on to say, there is no such thought, for all we possess belongs to the Lord. The Israelite might pay his tenth and then justly feel that the other nine-tenths could be looked upon as his own, to do what he liked with. With the Christian, however, it is otherwise, and though there must be some thought of proportion, yet each individual must go to the Lord for him or herself as to the right use of every part of his income or property, and while the Lord would not lay on His children any burden, He would have us exercised before Him as to all we may possess under His good hand.

After some little conversation, the lady was advised to go home again and pray to the Lord as to how she should use her possessions, as no one else could guide her as to this.

On leaving, however, she put into the student's hand a packet of money, saying she would like to leave it with him for use in the Lord's service, as she had had it so impressed on her mind that she was to call and see him that very evening, that she felt

sure there must have been some reason for it, and that this was what money she had by her. No longer doubting that it really had been sent for their tract, they thankfully took the package, and found that it contained just the amount they had estimated they would need for the purpose.

And so the first tract was printed and sent out, carrying with it the message of life and peace, and since then there has been a regular supply of ministry suitable for both the converted and the unconverted, distributed free of charge in a similar way, which has been used in blessing to many in far distant places, who were seeking for light in much the same way as the student and his friends. After ten years or so of this service, when questioned as to how they were able to send out some thousands of booklets each month free of all charge to the recipients, they replied that the money always came, and that while they could never say they had a full purse, yet they never had an empty one.

With the thoughts of more distant parts in their minds, however, they did not forget their own city, and before long a hall was hired where they could preach the word to all who would come to listen, and the Lord greatly blessed their preaching, and as time went on added to their number, so that there was a happy gathering of believers each Lord's day for the breaking of bread.

Very much on the lines of the gatherings

of the very early Christians was the little meeting. Some there were who were intellectual, highly cultured, educated men from the university—men who would have had a great future if they had thrown in their lot with the world and its pursuits, but they were prepared, and even glad, to set aside worldly prosperity and give their *all* for Christ's sake. Many were very poor, experiencing poverty such as is hardly known in England, but as in the early days, they had all things in common, and no one called anything his own. There were some who after paying their weekly expenses gave away all the rest, whatever it might be, and started clear the next week, but never having anything over.

One day, however, their funds ran lower than usual, and it became a question as to whether they could afford to keep on the hiring of the hall for the gospel preaching. The brethren were told of the difficulty and were asked to pray that money might be forthcoming, so that the preaching which had been so much blessed need not cease.

Among the university students who had come out to the Lord's name was one young fellow who was very poor, and as in many other cases in China it had only been by sacrificing everything that his family had been able to give him a college education. Though the summers are hot, the winters are very cold, and warm clothing is needed

for comfort during the bitter weather, so looking ahead he bought some wool and needles and getting someone to teach him he began to knit himself a sweater, for he was far too poor to be able to buy one, as many of his fellow students did. Week by week he plodded on, as it was a lengthy task to such a novice at the work, but at last the sweater was finished and ready to wear, just at the time when the appeal was made for money to rent the hall.

As he prayed about the matter, he could not help wishing he had money to give, for he truly loved the Lord and longed that others should learn to love Him too, but he had nothing at all, not a single cash to spare. Just then his eye fell on the sweater and a fresh thought came to him, and taking it up he went with it to one of the brothers saying that it was all he had, but if it could be sold he would gladly give it to help to provide money for the preaching. The brother demurred at taking a thing that had cost the young man so much time and trouble, and that he knew he really needed himself, but when pressed to take it "for the Lord's work" he could refuse no longer, but without saying whose was the gift he made known to the little gathering that he had a sweater for sale and would be glad if anyone could hear of a purchaser.

Shortly after four sisters came to him bringing their accumulated savings, which

all told amounted to twelve dollars, and said that if it were enough they would like to buy the sweater. None of them knew the real price of sweaters, and it was really more than it was worth, but the brother, very much wondering what they wanted it for, as it would not fit any one of them, handed it over in exchange for the money.

The sisters then asked if he would do them a favour, and without saying from whom it came give the sweater to a young brother whom they had noticed the previous week shivering all through the meeting. It must have been hard for that brother not to tell them the whole story—perhaps he did, for though they did not know it, it was the very young man who had knitted the sweater and given it to the Lord !

We have the promise that the Lord will be no man's debtor, and He knew the need that was there, and took His own way of providing the money, and yet did not forget the bodily needs of His servant.

This is only one of many instances in which means were provided for carrying on the work, and that, not from the abundance of their means, but from self-denial in the deepest poverty and the willingness to spend all and be spent in the Master's service.

As time went on one and another began to visit other cities and towns preaching and teaching as they went, so that here and there fresh meetings were formed and gathered

out to the Lord's name in the same simple way. At one time some of them had it very much laid on their hearts to visit an island off the coast which had up to that time not been reached by the gospel message, so it was arranged that a small party should go over by boat. In the meeting was a little boy who had only recently been converted, and from being somewhat of a trouble at the meeting on account of his restless, fidgety ways, he had become a model of good behaviour, though no doubt he found it as hard to sit still for a long time, as many other children do. When he heard of the visit to the island he begged most earnestly to be allowed to be one of the party, and at last, as there seemed no real reason against it, he was given permission to go. It was a wonderful thing for the child to go on his first missionary journey, and with his heart full of the blessing he had just received himself he longed to tell others of the Saviour that they did not know.

On reaching the principal fishing town of the island they set about looking for a room where they could stay, but news had gone round, in the mysterious way that it does, of the purpose of their visit, and no one would open their doors to the strangers. At last a chemist took pity on them, and said they could have his attic if they liked, but he explained that it was *very* dirty and they would have to clean it themselves. Thankful

for any quarters, however undesirable, they took possession of the room, and found it quite as dirty as it had been described, so that they spent a most uncomfortable and restless night.

The next day, however, while some of the party set to work to try to make the place a little more habitable, the boy, accompanied by one of the older men went down to the shore and entered into conversation with the fishermen who were spreading out their nets to dry, and having time on their hands were not unwilling to hear the truth from the strangers, about whom such wild and extraordinary rumours had been flying.

"Another God?" they said, "there is only one god, and he is in our temple here."

Eagerly the little lad broke in, his eyes alight with longing, "Oh, but we have come to tell you about the one true God who answers prayer! Can *your* god who is in the temple do *that*?"

"Of course he can answer prayer," replied the men, "every year we pray for a fine day for the procession which is to be held on Thursday, and for seventy years it has not rained on that day, so we know that he answers prayer."

Quite unabashed the boy replied, "The one true God is stronger than your god, and you will see—this year it *will* rain on that day, for we will ask our God to send rain. You will see."



Unconvinced, the men smiled at such child's talk, and turned away to go on with their work, but the boy's thoughts were full of the procession of the following Thursday, when the god of the island would be carried through the town for the people to see and worship. It would be a great ceremony unless the rain came, and all the countryside would turn out to see it.

On reaching their room and telling the rest of their party what had happened, and how he had told the men that it would certainly rain on Thursday, the boy was surprised when one of his friends, in a voice filled with consternation, said, "Oh, you should not have said that, for supposing it does *not* rain; what will they say then?"

"But doesn't God answer prayer then?" anxiously asked the little lad, "I thought He did."

"Well, yes, He does," admitted the others, "but still——"

It was not long before they were all on their knees praying most earnestly that for the glory of His great name God, the Almighty One, would speak to these poor heathen and shew His power in allowing rain to come on the day which had always been fine for seventy years. Somewhat comforted when they rose from their knees, they agreed to leave it with the Lord, for they had laid the matter before Him and desired to be at rest about it. During the intervening days they

spent their time in the surrounding villages, but were back in the town in time for the all-important day.

Early on Thursday morning the first one awake opened the paper-shuttered window and revealed to their consternation a brilliantly fine day. With heavy hearts, though even now it might not be too late, they all knelt down once more and besought the Lord to come in and confound the idol, that was but a thing made with men's hands and yet was usurping the place and title of God Almighty. Their faces still betrayed anxiety when they rose from their knees, for so much hung on the answer to their prayer, and yet to look at the sunshine it seemed impossible that the rain should come.

But come it *did*, and that not long before the procession was to start, so that the roadways were running with water and the Chinese, who hate the rain, speedily took shelter wherever they could find it! Not to be beaten, the priests brought out the idol, but the men in charge could do nothing in the slippery mud, and after a vain attempt to proceed it was dragged back again into the temple, the priests giving out that the procession would be held in a few days time at six o'clock in the evening.

In the little upper room that evening there were thankful hearts, perhaps not unmixed with shame, that the only one of their number who had really trusted the Lord was

the little lad. Still they realised that the test was not yet over, but their confidence was restored, and praise and thanksgiving was mingled with prayers that God would speak yet again, and that in no uncertain manner, to the praise of His great name.

They decided to hold a meeting at the same hour as the procession was intending to start, and hiring a hall they placarded the door with notices of the coming meeting, advising all to arrive in good time so as to avoid the rain which they fearlessly announced would certainly fall. An hour before the time the hall was packed and before long a terrific thunderstorm burst over the town, deafening and terrifying everyone.

As before an attempt was made to hold the procession, but the men fell down in the mud, and finally the idol itself toppled over and was broken! It was a day of disaster for the temple, but in the hall near by a message of such power was sounding forth as the people had never heard before. When had they ever heard before of a God who loved them, or of One who sent His Son to die for them? Clearly He was stronger than their own god, for had He not sent the rain twice and stopped their procession? It was worth thinking about.

How gladly would one speak of a mighty work done in that place as the result of just a little lad's faith, but this is a day of small things, and though the results may seem

poor, as judged by our standards, they are dear to the heart of God and in the day of display may prove to be greater than we have thought, and the thing that has had a small beginning may surprise us in that day by its magnitude. In some places in the inland provinces that had not been personally visited, but reached by the magazines and tracts, news came of a work begun, and from time to time such reports would be carried to the brethren in the larger cities.

Once a brother had gone to a university town in the north for a week's meetings, and after the first preaching two men came up to him and explained that they had been reading for some time past with great interest the magazines. They with some others of their town had begun to hold meetings and were hoping soon to have the breaking of bread, but that hearing in some way of the meetings then being held, they had walked two hundred miles in the hopes of getting a little more light and help. Later when there was a conference held at Shanghai the same two men walked all the way there, and when offered the money for their return fare they hesitated before taking it, saying, "If the Lord has allowed us to be poor we would rather be poor." In this way, from time to time, news has come of gatherings that have never been visited, far inland where the Lord has worked by the printed ministry. In one district where five years ago the first

meeting was held, there are now fourteen meetings and seven hundred breaking bread, while there may be meetings of a similar kind being held in other places that are as yet unknown.

That it is the Lord's own work one cannot doubt, and that it has come about apart from any foreign influence is quite certain, for until recently no European has broken bread with them. and the meetings have been purely Chinese, Apart from the working of the Holy Spirit such a thing could not be, and if doubts should be cast on the abiding nature of the work, one can only feel that the same Spirit that keeps *us* from day to day will keep them, and having begun a good work in that land He will finish it, to His glory. The simple dependence of the Chinese brethren, their habits of prayer over every matter, however small, and the spirit of sacrifice one for another shewn among them, might well be followed more closely by those living in more highly favoured lands; for only under such conditions will there be any ability to stand, and no amount of light will make up for anything lacking in these directions.

As the coming of the Lord draws near, He is working in many places that hitherto have been in darkness, and we as His people are invited to share His interests on earth, as we shall share them in heaven. Our pathway here may be very circumscribed and

limited, but every child of God has all the forces of prayer at his or her command, and if we really love our Saviour shall we not wish to pray for His work, not only in our own land, but wherever the glad tidings are being made known? Is it a thing incredible that as He is working in China, so He will work in other heathen lands before His return, and shall we not delight to pray that the gospel may indeed be made known to every creature and richly blessed, that the time may be hastened and the church of God completed? "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people. . . . Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered."

"Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people."

Well may we all say, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

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