

CHAPTER XII.

1847.

DEPARTURE FOR CHINA.

THE missionary's departure from England, though delayed in the manner above described, took place at last somewhat suddenly. The ship in which he was to sail, the *Mary Bannatyne*, was dropping slowly down the Channel under a light breeze towards Portsmouth, and it was expected that several days would elapse before we should have to join her there. He had accordingly made several preaching engagements for the intervening days, and was, on the evening of Tuesday, the 8th June, in the very act of entering the Scotch Church at Woolwich in fulfilment of one of these, when an express from London reached him, conveying the information that a favourable wind had sprung up and carried the ship by a rapid run to Portsmouth, and that not an hour was to be lost if he wished to join her before she sailed. He accordingly hastened at once to the railway station in hopes to catch the last train, but was, happily as it turned out, too late. Next morning he and I set out together, not without some fears of after all missing the passage, but arrived to our joy in good time. On reaching the harbour we saw the ship riding at anchor in the roads, and procuring a boat reached it in half an hour. Finding that the vessel would not after all sail till the evening, I resolved to remain on board, and return by the latest boat. We retired to the little cabin and spent the time in reading the sacred Word, and in pouring out our hearts in prayer, for the last time it might be in this world together. He read the 17th chapter of St. John, and the last of 2 Timothy from the 10th verse to the end, accompanying the slow and interrupted reading with many gracious and quickening words out of the fullness of the heart. The latter passage especially he bade me mark and remember, and convey it to his friends and brethren at home as a parting message of love. Coming to the last words he paused for a moment and said: "The last words are, 'Salute Prisca,' &c.; this *you* must do for me: for I could not write," and burst into a flood of tears. We wept together. In the course of the afternoon he had shut himself up for an hour or two for the purpose of writing, and I saw afterwards on the table a sheet of paper half-written addressed to his mother; but the effort had been too much for him, and he had given it over. After again joining in prayer we embraced and parted, he again and again exclaiming as he lay upon my neck, "O! is it not blessed; is it not wondrous grace to be separated in this way, separated for such a cause and for such a work?" His last words were, "Remember our father and mother." As we pushed off from the vessel's side, he called after me and pointed to his Bible, which he held up in his hand, as if to say

that there was the only thing worth living for in all the world, and the one ever lasting bond of union for those who are parted here. A fresh breeze sprung up; the light cutter flew before the wind, and in a few moments we had left the vessel far behind us; but long as I watched its lessening form in the deepening darkness I seemed to see him standing in the same attitude still. I felt that I had parted not from a brother only, but from one far above me, a true and eminent saint of God. Just as we were nearing the shore they had drawn up their anchor and spread their sails to the winds.

Three hours afterwards he was again in his cabin, resuming with more calm and collected thoughts the interrupted letter to his mother:—

“*On board the ‘Mary Bannatyne,’ off Portsmouth, June 9th, 1847, 11.30 P.M.*—MY DEAR MOTHER,—My embarkation has been at the last, as I will tell in detail, rather sudden and hurried. I expected not to leave London until tomorrow morning, but the ship got quickly round to Portsmouth, and last night when entering the door of Mr. Thomson’s church at Woolwich to preach, a messenger from London met me to say that I must get to Portsmouth without losing an hour lest the ship should be gone. I endeavoured accordingly to leave London by the last train, but was too late, and happily so, for in case I had got away I would not have seen I.; but as it was graciously arranged, I came away at seven A.M., and had J., I.[Ismay], and Mrs. I. to the station, and I. all the way. He was on board during most of the day, and left us in the evening. My heart was too full to put pen to paper at that time, and I left as I thought all news for him to give; but since he went away I find that by our pilot I may still send a few lines, which I cannot omit the duty of attempting. I have now entered on a new sphere of duty and trial, I mean on board ship. Much fidelity and wisdom are needed to be a witness for the Lord in such circumstances, and I have in this matter as well as with reference to ulterior designs much need of fervent believing prayer. Do not forget us. May all that sail with us be given to Jesus. We have already begun worship in the cuddy [officer’s cabin], and I hope it may be continued throughout, if possible, morning and evening. I felt it a great privilege to have I. with me at the last. May this separation for the gospel be to each of us a blessing. Ah! what grace is manifested in *such* a separation! Why am I not, as many, going forth in search of mammon; or put to sea, as some are, because they are unprofitable even in man’s account on land? Who maketh thee to differ? O! to live under the full influence of Christ’s constraining love! To us to live will thus be Christ, and to us to die will be gain. We know not the progress nor the end of this voyage, nor what news may reach us from Britain should we reach our destination. Yet I rejoice to go. I feel that I am where it is the Lord’s gracious will that I should be, and I would join with all his people in praying, ‘Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’ All the ends of the earth shall yet remem-

ber and turn to the Lord; and all the kindreds of the people shall do homage unto him; for the kingdom is the LORD'S, and he is the Governor among the nations. On his vesture and on his thigh there is a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords! Now may the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us! Salute all the brethren for us. Thus in haste again writes, dearest mother, your affectionate son, —Wm. C. BURNS.”

Such was his farewell, full alike of solemn tenderness, and of brave, resolute hopefulness, to his native land, and to the home of his birth and early years. The progress of his voyage, and his unwearied labours for Christ in the narrow sphere now meanwhile assigned to him, will be best followed in the words of his own journal, which again becomes more or less continuous:—

“*At Sea, Wednesday, June 23d, 1847.*—It is now a fortnight since I embarked in this vessel; and thus far God hath graciously prospered our way. For a week after we set sail we were detained by contrary and, in general, stormy winds at the mouth of the British Channel, but since that time the weather has been delightful, and we have been wafted speedily on our way, so that tomorrow morning, if the wind continue favourable, we shall pass by Madeira. During the first few days I was rather sick, but I have been able from the beginning to do a little at my Chinese studies, and during the last few days my progress has been, I think, encouraging. We have had public worship every evening in the public cabin, and today I succeeded in getting it begun also in the morning. . . .

“*At Sea, lat. 23° south, long. 29° west, Wednesday, July 28th.*—It is seven weeks this day since I came on board this vessel. Hitherto we have been all mercifully preserved, and have advanced steadily, though not very rapidly, on our voyage. Some of the crew have had illness, but they are again able for their duties. I have suffered a good deal, and still suffer almost daily, from nausea, which abridges my ability for close application to study. I am, however, able to do a little from day to day in acquiring the Chinese, and occasionally I make more rapid advances. The work is pleasant and profitable from the Bible being my text-book, and in consideration of the momentous end which I have in view. Morrison was enabled to accomplish a great work in preparing such a version of the New Testament as that which it is my privilege to study. I have felt much interested by his *Memoirs*, which I am again reading. He was a *spiritual* man as well as a man of strong natural parts, and was thus both naturally and by grace qualified for the work of translation. . . .

“I have been graciously permitted hitherto to maintain family worship in the cabin every evening, and generally also in the morning, although with occasional difficulty, the desire not being as yet very great. The illness of one of the seamen opened my way a good deal in the fore-castle, and I now have worship there also at least twice a week. On Sabbaths all join with us excepting one or two. When shall

the cry be heard among us: 'What shall I do to be saved?' Yesterday afternoon we passed Trinidad, a very picturesque island, uninhabited except by a few goats and swine. It stands quite alone in the midst of this vast ocean. Should our voyage be favourable, we shall not again see land until near the Chinese seas. The Island of St. Paul's comes first in sight. I was glad to find on crossing the line that the heathenish practices which used to be common on shipboard, and of which Dr. Morrison gives an account in his journal forty years ago, had no place among us. All went on as usual, with only some passing allusions to the subject. Such changes among our seamen are hopeful.

'Do thou thy glory far advance
Above both sea and land,' Psalm xxxvii.

"Lat. 33° south, long. 14° west. Thursday, August 5th.—This morning at half-past four o'clock, Thomas M'Leod, an apprentice in the ship, fell overboard and was drowned. They tried to render him assistance, but all was vain, as it was dark and rainy, and the wind was changing at the time. He was aged about seventeen, a native of Rothesay, and the son of a widow. The evening before last I had worship in the steerage or half-deck with him and some of the other men, and was led to speak specially of the danger of sudden death to which they were exposed. He seemed attentive, and answered me the question in the Shorter Catechism, 'What is Prayer?' I had also conversed and prayed with him previously when sick. This is all I can say of his case. He is, alas! now numbered with those whom the sea will give up at the last day to stand before the great white throne. It is sad to see and *feel* how little this solemn event seems to affect us. Who can tell but it may be the precursor of other displays of the Lord's righteous hand? May I and others be taught to prepare for the Lord's coming! I am still enabled to continue worship morning and evening (with occasional interruptions in the morning) in the cabin. In the half-deck and in the forecabin I have the fullest liberty to do all I can for these precious souls. I am sometimes refreshed in these exercises, though I cannot see any special evidences of fruit. 'Let us not be weary in well-doing.' We are now about 1600 miles from the Cape of Good Hope. The weather has been fine hitherto, but this being the winter season in these southern regions it is now becoming cold, and may be expected to be stormy. I go on pretty regularly with my Chinese, and find it gradually become more familiar, although it is evident from the nature of the language that it must require long practice to render it at all natural to a European mind and tongue. I occupy myself much in translating the English New Testament into Chinese, and comparing these rude attempts with Morrison's version. This I find an admirable method of mastering the substance of the language, although the peculiar Chinese manner of thought and expression can only be fully attained from studying native authors. This I am also practising to a certain extent. . . .

"Thursday, August 26th.—Since the previous date we had some very stormy weather, with an intervening calm of some days. The wind, however, when strongest, was favourable, and has been therefore less severely felt. On Tuesday (24th) it blew almost a hurricane from the north-west. I was standing on the poop when a lofty wave broke over the vessel. By its force and the rolling of the vessel I

was lifted from the deck, but having a firm hold I was mercifully preserved. My watch was filled with salt water, and the chain snapped. How in a moment might the pulse of life have been thus arrested! ‘Thou wilt keep him in *perfect peace* whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.’ In the cabin our conversation occasionally turns upon the things of God. I have, however, more to do generally in witnessing for our God and Saviour’s authority and grace by my own walk than by words. Indeed, when one is so closely connected with others as in the cabin of a ship, a holy and consistent deportment is indispensable in order to maintain without shame a verbal testimony for the truth. I have reason to bless the Lord for much of his comforting presence in this my little cabin, where I am so much alone, and also for timely aid in more public occasions. How holy and how useful is the Lord willing that I should be! This is a solemn thought, involving an unknown amount of responsibility. ‘Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name,’ &c. One of my daily duties is to teach Dr. Morrison’s little daughter to read. She had just got the alphabet, but is now making encouraging progress—an interesting child. She commits to memory verses of hymns, and has now got ‘The Lord’s my Shepherd,’ &c. *Jesus*, look on this child, for thy name’s sake: Amen. For the last few weeks I have little *nausea*, and am able to make encouraging progress in the Chinese. . . .

“*Entrance of Java Sea (opposite North Island), Saturday night, October 9th.*— I am now near the close of another week of mercy and faithfulness manifested toward me on the part of a redeeming covenant God. On Sabbath morning last we were in shallow water, but no land had been seen, the weather being thick. At ten A.M. the curtain was uplifted, and opposite my cabin window appeared the high land of Sumatra at the mouth of Sunda Straits. This joyful sight at this moment served to unite the passengers in a short meeting for divine worship when there seemed little likelihood of their assembling, the steward having brought word that neither the captain nor any of the crew could attend. I sung Psalm cxv. 1-4, 10, read and commented shortly on Ephesians iii., and concluded with prayer. I did not go to dinner, as I wished to seek a right view of the sin of trampling on the Lord’s-day, and to praise him for his great mercy in saving our ship’s company from the temptation to violate it at Anjer, as they might have done.¹ . . . On Tuesday morning we were within ten miles of Anjer, sailing slowly over a glassy sea covered with the canoes of the Javanese and Malays fishing, or bringing off provisions to offer for sale. Six or seven canoes came under my cabin-window to trade with the captain, &c. I looked out to them, and when they stroked their naked arms and breasts to intimate that they wished clothes, I could only smile, shake my head, and hold up an open book (the book of God), to let them know that I was come to teach them, and not to trade or clothe their bodies. They understood my meaning, and looked to me again and again smiling, as if well pleased; and one man put his hands together as if in the attitude of prayer. In the afternoon God sent us for a short time a favourable breeze, which carried us to Anjer Bay about five o’clock; but left us outside the anchorage, which, owing to the current, we did not

¹ It had been for some days anticipated that they would reach Anjer on the Lord’s-day.

reach until seven A.M. of Wednesday (October 6th). . . . I had many quiet opportunities of meeting the natives who came on board to trade. I particularly spoke to two Malays, *Acsan* and *Cassiden*, who waited most of the day on the poop in charge of provisions which had been bought and sent on board. In compliance with their entreaties (they are continually begging, and understand a good deal of English here) I covered each of them with a long white shirt (the two made for me by Mrs. Hardy, my worthy hostess at Kingston, Upper Canada), and spoke to them as I best could of Jesus' blood-washed garment of salvation, longing for the time when many of their nation shall be found sitting at Jesus' feet as disciples, thus clothed and in their right mind. A subsequent request which they made for *soap* to keep their shirts clean afforded a new emblem by which to instruct them. I also met a Mr. S——, second mate of the *Regina* of Bombay, a large vessel passing down from China. I found him to be a brother-in-law to Mr. Smith,² late Church missionary to China, whose book I have been reading with interest and profit. I gave him two religious books, with an inscribed promise to pray for him. May I remember and be enabled to fulfil all such engagements! . . .

“*Java Sea, Monday, October 11th.*—I had opportunities of speaking further to some of the poor Malays, and learned from them a few words of their language, which seems easy for a European to pronounce. They seem a simple people, rather fitted to obey than to rule; but, as may be expected, they are awfully deceitful. When going to speak to some of them in a canoe close to the vessel, I saw sitting near me on the quarter-deck an old grey-haired man, unlike any person I had before seen. I thought with myself who he could be, but, strange to say, never thought of China as his country until he came round to where I was standing, and I perceived his grey and scanty hair plaited into the *tail* and hanging down his back. He was not like any representation of the Chinese that I had seen, much less *plump* and more intelligent, and he was the first of that great nation that I had seen in person. I exchanged with him a few words in English, which he spoke very well, and when he learned that I knew a little of Chinese, he took out a paper (a receipt for goods that had been bought from him) written in English and Chinese, to see if I knew the characters. I recognized some of them, and found that I had got the correct pronunciation. I went on deck soon after with a part of the Chinese Scriptures (New Testament), that I might show it to him, but he was just leaving the vessel, and our intercourse ended. I had at least mentioned to him the name of Jesus. . . . On Saturday forenoon we were in company of two vessels from London to China, the barque *Anne and Jane*, which sailed a fortnight before us, and the ship *Marquis of Bute*, which belongs to the same owners as this vessel, and sailed a month later. Her master, Captain Bannatyne, is from Rothesay. He was on board for some hours. It was indeed a cause of thankfulness that all this preceded the Lord's-day; and that on Sabbath (yesterday) no one came near us to be a cause of temptation. We had public worship on the poop as the day was fine. . . . I preached from Matthew xxviii. 18-20, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, &c. And, lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.’ I felt much supported in opening up briefly these mighty words,

² Afterwards Bishop of Victoria, Hong-Kong.

and had an opportunity of speaking to present circumstances among ourselves, while I showed on the one hand the *duty* of Christ's ministers, and on the other the *duty* and *responsibility* of those *individuals, parents, masters, &c.*, to whom this gospel comes in obeying it themselves, and allowing it to have free course among those placed under them. The rest of the Sabbath I spent in my own cabin, and though there was no further meeting for worship on board, yet I trust the presence of God was among us. The name of the vessel that joined us on Saturday, *Marquis of Bute*, reminds me of circumstances worthy of being recorded, but hitherto omitted. In the month of March last I visited Bute and Arran, preaching in Arran to a divided people without a minister at Brodick, and in Rothesay to the desolate congregation of the lamented Peter M'Bride, a faithful and much-honoured servant of God, cut down in the midst of signal usefulness, particularly in his native parish of Knapdale, in visiting which he died. When at Rothesay I was asked to preach in the parish of Kingarth at an inn in Kilchattan Bay. The people came out well, many belonging to the Established Church, and some impression seemed to be made. One evening when preaching on 'the new birth,' I made allusion to one whom I had known ten years before in their neighbourhood, who seemed evidently to have undergone that great change. This was Mr. John Smith, the Marquis of Bute's head gardener (at Mountstuart, some miles from where we were), who was a remarkable man of God; but was hated on this account, and at the time of the Disruption was cast out of his situation for following the protesting church. He had died only a few months before, and his memory was sweet to many and to me also, as I had often enjoyed, along with James Denniston, the solemn privilege, when we were teaching in Bute as tutors during the summer months, of visiting his abode and being benefited by his heavenly converse and prayers. Having been led to ask about his widow, I determined to call on her in returning to Rothesay, at the cottage which he had built in the midst of a garden which he had rented, and which he cultivated in his last days for his support. I somehow deferred, however, my intended visit until the last time that I passed from Kingarth, and this was well ordered. The last evening I was there the poor people insisted on my accepting a few pounds as a token of their gratitude, and to defray my expenses. I refused it as I was not in want, but had at last to yield. The following day I called on Mrs. Smith, found her unwell and troubled in other ways. Her husband had been always open-handed, saying the *marquis would not see him want* in his old days, and now he was gone, and his poor widow said few inquired how she was provided for. She told me what I had not heard, that her husband held many meetings for prayer in Kilchattan Bay, and that when debarred by the factor from the people's houses, he hired the very room where I had spoken of him, and met the people there, and that he was in the act of beginning one of these meetings when the letter was put in his hands which dismissed him from his place. I had worship with her—poor woman—reading Psalm xxxvii. as applicable to his case, and then told her of the money that had been given me, and that I doubted not God intended it for her. She wept as she received it, saying, 'That will just free me from my difficulty. The term is near, and on Saturday I had to say to the collector for the schemes of the Church for the first time that I could give nothing.' Of the other places which I visited when last in Scotland I spent the longest time in Montrose and neighbour-

hood, ministering to a vacant congregation in the town, and to Mr. Bain of Logie's congregation during his absence at Malta. No very remarkable blessing appeared in either place, but among Dr. Brewster of Craig's people—especially the children in the school at the fishing village—a gracious work of the Holy Spirit seemed to be going on, chiefly through the instrumentality of the female teacher. Preaching there in the beginning of winter I met their venerable pastor,³ who seemed to be ripening for the Lord's garner, and was a few months after called away. I also there met once more that dear man of God, Andrew Bonar of Collace, who had been there before, but Barnabas-like, 'seeing the grace of God, he was glad,' and returned again to exhort, instruct, and comfort them. At Logie I found Mr. T. usefully employed as teacher and elder, one of those who professed to have experienced a change of heart during the awakening at Aberdeen in 1840. When at Manchester in the month of May I found also Mr. M., converted at Dundee, and Mr. J. from Perth, both employed as missionaries, and coming forward to the ministry. May all such prove to be indeed living branches of the true Vine, and bear much fruit by *abiding in Him!*

"*Monday, October 25th.*—Since the previous date I have been able to do comparatively little at the Chinese on account of the heat, which has been very great and oppressive. We have made good progress during the last week, and are now about seven hundred miles only from our destination. We are today, however, nearly becalmed, and the future is with our God, who reigneth over all. . . . Taking into view the state of my own soul, and my future prospects in *nearing* the coast of China, I felt it duty to spend the rest of the day (Sunday, October 24th, after divine service) in my own cabin, and did not leave it to dinner or tea, or indeed at all. I trust my soul feasted in the Lord's presence, and upon his truth and grace. My heart visited many past scenes of labour and many far-distant friends and brethren in the faith of Jesus; and I enjoyed more than usual liberty and depth both in confessing sin and in pleading for grace to myself and others. . . . I have often found of late the chapters in Mr. M'Cheyne's Calendar for the daily reading of the Scriptures exceedingly suitable to my wants. His *Memoir* and *Remains* also I find now more valuable than ever. I am reading also again, and with new interest as we approach the scene of his labours, the memoirs of Dr. Morrison the Chinese missionary. The earlier part of these memoirs especially contains a precious development of his very genuine and eminent spiritual character. He appears to have been indeed an upright servant of the living God. Oh! for grace to follow in this respect in his footsteps. Dr. Milne was a precious man of God, and his Chinese tracts—some of which I have—seem to be of much value. In these, his works, I doubt not, will follow him. His life by Philip has too much of Dr. Philip and too little of Dr. Milne to possess all the interest and importance which might belong to such a work. And yet some of the biographer's views seem striking and useful.

"*Monday, November 8th.*—Subsequently to the previous date for about ten or twelve days we had calms or very light winds, so that we made little progress ex-

³ "The Rev. James Brewster, D. D., brother of the late distinguished Sir David Brewster, and himself a man of fine culture as well as deep piety. He was our father's near neighbour in his first parish, and an endeared and valued friend.

cept to the eastward. The captain was glad at getting so far to the east (close to the coast of Luzon, a large island belonging to the Spaniards, in which Manila is the chief port), as he counted on meeting the north-east monsoon, and so running direct across towards the north-west to Hong-Kong. But how short-sighted is human wisdom even in these natural things! On Saturday night last it began to blow a gale which continued to increase during the whole of Sabbath, and since this morning has been so very severe that some part of the main-mast has been blown away, and until this moment (half-past eight o'clock P.M.) we are running *under bare poles*, *i.e.* unable to carry the smallest sail, at the mercy of the winds and waves, or more truly at the mercy of that living God 'who bringeth the wind out of his treasures.' During the day the wind was from the west, and we were fast drifting towards the land, which is thought to be very near. Had this continued our danger must have soon been imminent; but as it is ordered in the Lord's mercy, the wind has gone more into the south, and though the storm still rages we drift rather towards our wished-for port, and the hope of deliverance gladdens every heart. I trust these things are ordered for spiritual good to some or many, as well as to manifest the glory of a present God. I have been kept in perfect peace hitherto, I trust, from having the mind stayed on the Lord. The Lord has also wondrously again begun to open a door among us for delivering the testimony of his truth. On Thursday week I found unexpectedly a favourable opportunity of asking again that public worship should be resumed;⁴ and had the request granted *cordially*, although I was still to be confined to worship in the cuddy, and not to go into the fore-castle. I took the liberty thankfully; but again renewed my protest against the restriction. Worship accordingly was held every night until this storm began, which made yesterday a silent Sabbath; and this evening, when I did not think of proposing worship, it was requested for the first time by one of the passengers. Thus I trust the truth is gaining ground among us. The moral atmosphere of our society has been for weeks past a good deal purified. Sung Psalm xlvi.; read Isaiah xxvi.

"Tuesday Evening, November 9th.—During last night the storm abated, and this morning revealed the land very near—about twelve or fifteen miles off. Had the storm overtaken us fifteen hours sooner our peril must have been imminent, as we were then within six or eight miles of the shore; and as it was, had the wind not changed from west to south we must soon have been in great jeopardy, and in still greater suspense and alarm. We have been during today advancing prosperously on our course, and I do trust that that almighty and holy Being whose mercies have been so great has still greater, even saving mercies in store for many among us. I am encouraged to hope this more than before, after having been much cast down about an hour ago. No one came at worship time, and the captain came in, looked at the barometer, and went on deck. I had gone into my cabin, and was spreading the matter before the Lord when the steward came to tell me the captain was waiting for worship. We had only him and Dr. Morrison, but the meeting was sweet; portion in order, Cornelius and Peter, &c.—opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles, Acts x.; and from some conversation after we had concluded I enter-

⁴ There had latterly been less liberty in this respect than he had at first hoped.

tain the hope that I may soon have full liberty as before to visit among the crew. Should it be so, may the Holy Spirit be present giving liberty to preach Jesus crucified for sin as the refuge for dying souls, and spiritual liberty to every soul to receive him as a Saviour and Lord unto eternal life! Jesus hath the key of David. He openeth and no man shutteth. It is five months this day since I came on board this vessel. *The Lord hath been gracious and true!*

“*Hong-Kong, Tuesday, December 7th.*—After the storm of November 8th we had favourable winds, and anchored in Hong-Kong Bay at midnight on Saturday the 13th. On Monday I came on shore, meeting a very kind and Christian welcome from the friends of the gospel here, and finding such doors of useful labour immediately opened to me, as confirm me in the soundness of those convictions of duty which brought me here. I am most comfortably boarded with a Mr. and Mrs. Power, close to the mission premises of the London Society. Mr. Stevenson⁵ has been prevented from coming out to minister to the Presbyterians here, and this gives me a greater hold of my own countrymen, to whom I have opportunity of preaching once every Lord’s-day in the London Society’s chapel. My progress in Chinese is slow compared with my desires; but still I hope encouraging considered in the view of the difficulties of this very peculiar and hard language. On my arrival I was permitted once more to hear from my beloved parents—all well. Our deliverance from the perils of the deep appears now the greater, since we have heard within the last few days that the *Anne and Jane* from London, with which we were in company in the Java Sea, was on the 8th ult. driven on shore near Manila and totally lost. All, however, were saved except one of the crew and a passenger, Mr. Rogers from Edinburgh, who were washed off a raft to which they had betaken themselves, and were drowned. Another vessel also narrowly escaped, getting into Manila with the loss of all her masts.”

⁵ The Rev. George Stevenson, now of Pulteney Town, Wick, an early and much valued friend, who had been invited to undertake the pastoral charge of the Free Church congregation at Hong-Kong, but had been by providential circumstances prevented.