

## CHAPTER XVI.

1851–54.

AMOY.

A SAIL of four hundred miles in a north-easterly direction from Hong-Kong, along a bold and precipitous coast, rising occasionally to a commanding elevation, brings us to a group of islands scattered over the wide and spacious estuary of one of those rivers which here and there break the continuity of the rocky barrier. One of these is Amoy, separated from the mainland only by a narrow channel, in the midst of which again lies the smaller islet of Ku-long-soo, facing the town and harbour, and forming in the waters between an inner and safer anchorage. In approaching the city through this inlet, a long line of fortifications, rising from the water's edge and bristling with cannon, frowns upon us from the right, and would be indeed a formidable defence were an invading enemy simple enough to advance in this direction. Though only a small island of nine or ten miles diameter, and consisting mainly of rugged and barren hills, with here and there cultivated valleys running up between them, it contains within its narrow bounds upwards of a hundred towns and villages, and a population of 250,000 souls.

Of this teeming hive of human life, about 150,000 are congregated in the city which occupies the south-west corner of the island. It is a poor place, with close narrow streets, and rather more dirty than most other Chinese towns. "The people have generally an emaciated and sallow appearance, partly from poverty and the crowded state in which they live, but also from the prevalence of opium smoking. There are upwards of 600 public opium-smoking places, and the drug is said to be used very extensively in private houses."

Though not a place of very great commercial importance, it is, by its position and easy means of communication, a most convenient and commanding centre for missionary operations. Though within the limits of Southern China, it yet forms a sort of advanced post towards the north, with which communication is frequent and easy. Before it lies the vast province of Fo-kien, the great black-tea country, with its teeming myriads of industrious, peaceful, and comparatively friendly people; and behind it, at the distance of a few hours' sail, the beautiful island of Formosa, with its three millions of Chinese-speaking inhabitants. Within a distance of forty miles is a population of some millions, speaking nearly the same dialect, and accessible in all directions by canal and river navigation. The city of Chang-chow alone, of which Amoy may be said to be the port, lying a few miles up the river, con-

tains a population of from 200,000 to 500,000 souls. The view here as described by travellers is magnificent. "I had heard," says the Rev. Wm. Gillespie, of the London Missionary Society, "of the plain of Chang-chow; now I saw it. From a hill at the back of the city, yet within the walls, a grand panorama presented itself. There lay stretching far up the country a rich and luxuriant strath, and a noble river winding along at the foot of the hills. It reminded me of the strath of Tay."

Over this wide and fertile garden of souls the Christian missionary is free, with scarcely any hindrance, to roam at large. "In visiting Amoy," says the same writer just quoted, "the first thing that strikes a foreigner coming from the south, is the feeling of delight which he experiences in rambling everywhere unmolested. After being forcibly turned back on entering within the gates of the southern metropolis, as has been my experience repeatedly, it is pleasant to revel in the unrestrained luxury of rambling through the streets and everywhere within and without the walls of Cap-che, Amoy, Chang-chow, &c."

Of the circumstances of missionary life in this interesting field, I am tempted to give the following lively and graphic picture from the pen of the Rev. James Johnston, who two years afterwards joined the mission. In describing, to some juvenile correspondents, the "Gospel Boat," in which he performed his missionary journeys, he says:—

"It is not like anything you have seen in England. It is a genuine Chinese boat, and that is not to be seen anywhere but in China; so I must describe it to you as well as I can. Suppose yourself to be looking at a *wooden swan*, about twenty-three feet long by ten feet wide, with a little cabin six feet by four, standing about two feet above the back, which has been made even and boarded over; and if, instead of the long neck, you put a pair of eyes on the breast, and paint the whole blue, you will have a good idea of the *cut* of my boat. Add to this, one tall mast, and one short one at the head, with square sails made of bamboo poles across, and a thin network of bamboo slips, lined with bamboo leaves, with the necessary ropes and oars, and anchor and rudder, and we are fully rigged. A strange cut and rig you will think it, and some wise youth will say, 'She has too much breadth of beam for her length; and if she's round in the bottom, like the body of a swan, she won't take hold of the water;' but that is just what the Chinese wish their boats not to do: instead of making their boats to go *through* the water, and giving them the form of a fish, as in England, they make them to skim *over* the water, and give them the form of a water-fowl. In this they are right; and I think there are few boats in England that could keep up with the Amoy boats; with a fair wind and tide, I have often gone from six to seven miles in half an hour.

“It was on a beautiful morning in September that I set out on my excursion, with two Chinese evangelists, and five or six others as servants or boatmen. There were many other boats on the water, some going in one direction, some in another; and as we sailed through the fine harbour, we saw vessels of all kinds, from the British ‘brig-of-war’ to the clumsy junks, with their shapeless and unwieldy hulks, and boats from all the towns and villages around Amoy. Each district having a form of its own, we could tell the place from which they came, and form an opinion of the cargo of each, by knowing the commodity for which the district is famous. There were large junks with spices from Singapore, and others with the hardy productions of the north. Those long boats, covered with mats, are from Chang-chow, laden with silks or sugar; and those with cabins bring fruit, and vegetables, and rice from Pechuia, or Chioh-bey. But we have not time to notice all; we can only glance at the hundreds as we pass, and admire the busy appearance of the whole, and the gay colours of their flags, of every shape and hue. The wind was against us, but as it cooled the air, and the tide favoured us, we did not mind. Everything looked beautiful and cheerful; and as we glided on, passing many a boat more gaily painted than ours, but not so good at sailing, all seemed in good spirits, and the boatmen, who were all Christians, began to sing their Chinese hymns, in which we all heartily joined.

“After a few hours’ sailing, we anchored at the mouth of the river, and left the boat to come up at full tide; while the evangelists and I went on to visit one or two of the villages.

“You cannot well understand the effect the first arrival of a foreigner in one of the towns of China produces. The excitement caused by a lord-mayor’s show in London, or the arrival of a menagerie in a country town in England, is nothing to it; and as the oldest inhabitants of this district had never seen or even heard of a foreigner being in these parts, the whole population was in commotion. As I passed along the road, the labourers in the field stood still and stared, and those who had the presence of mind shouted to their companions in the adjoining field to come and look, while some of the boys ran before to bear the news to the village, and, on reaching it, I found that every house had turned out its occupants; old and young were standing ready to receive our company; every kind of occupation and amusement was at an end, and had been relinquished so suddenly, that everything stood where it just happened to be when the strange news arrived. The blacksmith had left the red-hot iron to cool on the anvil, the shoemaker’s awl was sticking in the old shoe he was patching, old matrons had risen up from the spinning-wheel, and boys had scarcely time to snatch up the toys they were playing with, even the beggar stood with the *rice-bowl* in his hand, asking no alms. And it was long before any of them returned to their occupations; it was an idle time to the old, and a holiday to the young. . . . It

is very curious to hear, in these distant heathen places, the great truths of the gospel passing from mouth to mouth, as you go along the streets, and it is pleasant to hear the children using the name of Jesus, even when they know but little of what Jesus did. After we had been some time there, I often heard the boys calling out in their own language, 'Jesus Christ is God,' or 'Jesus is God,' or 'Siong Te T'hian lang'—'God loves men.'

When Dr. Young reached Amoy in March, 1850, he found two bands of labourers already on the field:—Messrs. Stronach and Young of the London Society, and Messrs. Talmage and Doty of the American Board of Missions. Both of them had hopefully broken ground, and numbered at this time between them twenty adult converts, of whom eight belonged to the former, and twelve to the latter. Into hearty sympathy and co-operation with these brethren Dr. Young at once entered, whilst devoting himself specially to that department of the work which more peculiarly belonged to him. He was soon at the head of two native schools numbering together thirty children, who rapidly grew to eighty, and "over some of whom he was in due time permitted to rejoice as Christians," besides a hospital for the sick, in which while he ministered to the diseases of the body, two native evangelists pointed the way to the Divine Physician of souls. He was especially useful in curing the disease of opium-smoking, by the introduction of a medicine which soothed the imperious craving for the noxious drug, and thus rendered the effort to break off the habit more easy. By means of this treatment many permanent cures were effected, and the demand for the medicine was soon so great as to become a self-supporting business. Into the work thus hopefully begun Mr. Burns at once threw himself with characteristic energy, locating himself in the midst of the native population in an upper chamber above the school, and commencing the study of the Amoy dialect with the sound of Chinese voices perpetually in his ears. A few days afterwards he gives his first impressions of the place and of the work in a letter to his mother:—

*Amoy, July 25th, 1851.*—MY DEAR MOTHER,—As you see from the date I am now at Amoy, having left Canton only a few days after I last wrote you, and having been here already ten days. My expectations of getting the house I had in view at Canton were completely disappointed, and my way seemed hedged up to come here. I embarked accordingly at Whampoa in the English barque *Herald* for Amoy on the evening of June 26th, and after spending the Sabbath and Monday at Hong-Kong by the way, we reached here on the forenoon of July 5th. The passage was a delightful one, and very refreshing to the bodily frame after sixteen months in Canton. The days I spent in Hong-Kong were pleasant. I had two opportunities of preaching in Chinese, and stayed with my old friend Dr. Hirschberg. . . . I have found a very kind Christian welcome among the missionary brethren, English and American, here, and my expectations are more than exceeded in all I have seen as yet of Amoy as a place and as a missionary station.

I stayed for three nights with Mr. and Mrs. Stronach of the London Missionary Society, members of old in the Albany Street Congregational Church, Edinburgh; and I am now very much to my mind lodged in the middle of the Chinese population, in a little room connected with the school which was made over to Dr. Young by an American missionary on his removal here a year ago. Thus settled down amid Chinese voices, and with a Christian native servant (who prays with me; I cannot yet pray with him in his own dialect), and a Chinese teacher who comes daily, I am endeavouring to exchange my Canton for the Amoy Chinese. To speak this new dialect publicly and well may require a good deal of time; but even already I can make myself easily understood about common things, and am able to follow a good deal of what I hear in Chinese preaching. Dr. and Mrs. Young are well, and seem to be getting on well, through the divine blessing and guidance. I feel it a great privilege to be connected with him as well as with the other missionary brethren here, who all go on in much harmony, and not without tokens of divine encouragement. The people here present a striking contrast to the people of Canton in their feelings and deportment towards foreigners. Here all is quiet and friendly, and although there is here also a great apathy on the subject of the gospel, yet a good many seem to listen with attention, and the missionaries have inquirers who come to be taught. I was preaching last Sabbath-day (in English of course) from the words: 'Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold' (Matthew xxiv.); and, alas I felt they were solemnly applicable to my own state of heart. Unless the Lord the Spirit continually uphold and quicken, oh! how benumbing is daily contact with heathenism! But the Lord is faithful, and has promised to be 'as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' May you and all God's professing people in a land more favoured, but, alas! also more guilty, experience much of the Lord's own presence, power, and blessing, and when the enemy comes in as a flood, may the Spirit of the Lord—yea, it is said, the Spirit of the Lord *shall*—lift up a standard against him.”

His allusion here, as well as often in other letters, to the “benumbing influence of continual contact with heathenism,” and the danger generally of losing the keen edge and high tone of practical godliness while dwelling in a land in which all the usual means and incentives of the spiritual life are in so great a measure withdrawn, is at once touching and instructive, and suggests to us an aspect of the missionary life which most of us at home but little think of. We are apt to regard the Christian missionary as, by the very act of his consecration to so sublime a vocation, at once raised to a region of exalted faith and fervour far above us, in which all the ordinary perils to the life of the soul are unknown. The idea of a carnal, formal, perfunctory, unspiritual, and commonplace missionary, seems to us almost a contradiction in terms. We think naturally of those brave athletes of the Cross very much as ordinary Christians in early days thought of the ascetic recluses of the desert, as men by the very nature of their calling pre-eminently devoted in heart to God, and almost as a matter of course and *ipso facto*, “full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.” No mistake, I believe, can be more grievous. The whole history of missionary life and labour abundantly shows how possible

it is to lose the life of faith, even while seeking the propagation of the faith; to leave house and home and kindred for Christ's sake and the gospel's, and yet in a heathen land to breathe little either of the love of Christ or the grace of the gospel. Most of us little think how hard a thing it must be for a solitary wanderer in such a land as China, to maintain the life of Christian godliness in the very atmosphere and element of heathenism—without a Sabbath; without Christian fellowship or brotherhood; without a Christian face to look into or a Christian hand to grasp; with an utter disbelief of all Christian truths, and of everything belonging to a higher world, looking out from the eyes of all around him; with nothing left to feed the inner springs of the soul, but his Bible, his closet (if indeed he can command a closet), and his God. The brightest lamp will burn dim in an impure and rarified atmosphere. It is only by a special miracle that the children of Israel can thrive and be of fair countenance on the pulse and water of Babylon. The palm-tree of the desert "knoweth not when heat cometh," but it is because its roots are watered by hidden springs far under ground. We can understand then how it was that the subject of this memoir, while wandering amid the heathen villages on the mainland, so intensely longed for a Sabbath at Hong-Kong, and so continually cast himself on the succour of his brethren's prayers, not only for the success of his labours, but for the very life of his own soul. "The wilderness and the solitary place" were indeed often made glad for him, and the parched ground became as "a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water;" but he felt that it was so, and could only be so, by a special miracle of grace.

The effort "to exchange the Canton for the Amoy Chinese," did not prove so arduous a one as he had probably expected. Embued as he now was with the spirit and fundamental principles of the language, the transition from one form of it to another became to him comparatively natural and easy. While, as we have seen, he was from the first able to make himself understood on common matters, and to comprehend a good deal of what he heard in the public worship of God, its unaccustomed form soon became sufficiently familiar to him to admit of his himself using it in public discourse. By the beginning of the next year we find him again at his congenial work of spreading the good news of the kingdom among the towns and villages around, where the name of Christ had not yet been named: of date February 7, 1852, he writes in his journal:—

"I am now engaged a good deal in the work of spreading the gospel among this people, being in the gracious arrangements of God's providence favoured with the cooperation of professing Christians, both in-doors and in the open air. One of these baptized since I came here by the American missionaries aids me regularly, and others from time to time. We have meetings in the chapel of Tai-Hang, where Dr. Young resides, but get greater num-

bers in the open air when giving addresses in the open places of the city. During this week I also went to the neighbouring country (on the island) among the villages, spending a night in one of these in the house of my servant, and preaching the word with my companions T. and K. in six different villages. . . . The work increases in interest and hopefulness. ‘Thy kingdom come!’”

Again on March 6th he writes:—

“On Tuesday the 24th February I again set out to visit some villages on the island of Amoy, and returned in much mercy on Tuesday the 2d, being absent seven nights. . . . The day we set out was the 5th of the first Chinese month, and as at this season the villages are full of people who have not yet returned to their usual employments, we had large audiences everywhere. We generally addressed five or six meetings in the course of the day, and in all must have made known something of the truth to at least two or three thousand people. . . . The people were everywhere friendly and attentive. We distributed a large number of tracts and hand-bill copies of the ten commandments. May the seed of the Word sown spring and bear fruit to the glory of God and the salvation of souls!”

In his next excursion (March 16th) he crossed over to the mainland directly opposite Amoy; and in the course of seven days made a circuit of thirty villages, sowing everywhere plenteously the precious seed. Everywhere they were most kindly welcomed, everywhere met with numerous, willing, and often attentive audiences, were everywhere hospitably entertained by the people free of charge; and such was the missionary’s sense of the promising aspect of the field, and of the urgent need of additional labourers to reap the ripening harvest, that he gave a whole year’s salary to the funds of the Committee to hasten on the work.<sup>1</sup> “Surely,” said the convener in giving in the next report, “that field is ripe unto harvest, when the reaper sends home his own wages to fetch out another labourer!”

The next year his expedition took a wider range, including the great city of Chang-chow, already referred to as the chief centre of population in this part of the province.

“*Amoy, May 16th, 1853.*—Last month I had the privilege of paying a visit to Chang-chow-foo, a large city in this neighbourhood, at the distance of about forty English miles. We left Amoy on the morning of April 13, and returned here on the 26th, being absent about a fortnight, nine days of which were spent at Chang-chow, preaching to large and very interesting audiences both inside and outside the city. A week or two before our going, two native Christians, of the American Mission here, had visited Chang-chow, and preached to crowds for a number of days with much encouragement; and as they were purposing to go again, at the earnest desire especially of one of them,

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<sup>1</sup> £250.

it was arranged that I should also go, although there was some reason to fear that, unless God should graciously open our way, there might be some unwillingness on the part of the authorities to allow a foreigner to pay more than a brief visit, or to preach at large to the people. To avoid difficulty as far as possible, it was arranged that we should live on the river, in the boat which carried us there, going on shore only to preach. On our arrival we immediately went on shore, and being at once surrounded by many people, we had a fine opportunity, within a few steps of our boat, of preaching the Word of Life fully and without hindrance. We continued thus to preach on the bank of the river for three days, going upwards from our boat in the morning, and downwards in the afternoon, and addressing large companies for three or four hours at a time, until we had exhausted all the suitable stations near the river. We then went inwards, but still outside the walls, and at the very first station at which we preached, a man came forward and pressed us to go further on, and preach again opposite his house. This man the following morning came and was with us at worship in our boat; and when it began to rain, and our boat was more uncomfortable, the same individual opened his house to us, and here we stayed (making the man a small remuneration) for five days; and going on from this as our head-quarters, still inwards, we enjoyed the fullest liberty, both within and without the city, of preaching to large and very much engaged audiences. I do not think, upon the whole, that I have spent so interesting a season, or enjoyed so fine an opportunity of preaching the Word of Life since I came to China, as during these nine days. The people were everywhere urgent in requesting that a place might be opened for the regular preaching of the gospel among them; and I am glad to say that the American Mission here have already sent two of the members of the native church to open an out-station in this important and very promising locality. Since our return here there have also three individuals come here at their own expense, to inquire further into the nature of the gospel. The native Christians with me were the same with whom I went last year in making some visits to the neighbourhood; and I have pleasure in adding, that they seem to be moved by love to the Saviour, and to the souls of their fellow-countrymen, in giving themselves to this work.”

In a private letter of the same date, after referring more briefly to the above particulars, he adds, “We had all” (himself and three Chinese evangelists) “full work; for our meetings (of course in the open air) generally lasted three or four hours, becoming the longer the more interesting. You would have rejoiced could you have seen me the last two evenings of our stay addressing a large and attentive audience until the moon was up (it generally fell to me to speak last); I felt thankful, indeed, in such circumstances that it was my privilege to be sent to China to preach Christ crucified as the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. The time at which we were thus engaged was just during the meeting of the English Synod, and we may believe that in this the promise is fulfilled, ‘While they are yet speaking, I will hear.’”

To anyone who ever knew the writer of these lines, and who remembers how sparing he was of his words, and how jealously guarded in everything that related to himself, how little account too he made of mere surface appearances of interest and attention, it must be evident how much more is

implied in such expressions as coming from him, than that which meets the eye. Evidently when he speaks thus his words must have been visibly telling on the hearts of his hearers, and he must have felt sure from the hushed silence and earnest look with which they listened to him, that a power was at work within them mightier than his words, and such as he had never known on Chinese soil before. At Canton he had complained that though the Chinese listened with a sort of listless attention to the gospel message, it never seemed to “take hold” of the Chinese mind. It was clearly taking hold of the Chinese mind now.

His power of access, indeed, to the confidence and regard of the Chinese people, and the influence he exerted over them, seems to have been something remarkable, and far beyond what one would ever gather from anything he ever said of himself. It was stated by one who knew him and his work in China well, that during the time of the insurgent movements in the Amoy district, “when no other European could venture out among the rebels, he was free to go where he liked: ‘That’s the man of the Book,’ they would say, ‘he must not be touched.’ And once he had gone on one of his little tours, and as he did not come back for three weeks, his friends began to be quite afraid about him, when he appeared fat and well, having been fed up by a tribe he had got such access to, that they would scarcely let him away.” Indeed the chief difficulty of his biographer arises from his rigid habit of understating, rather than amplifying everything that regarded himself, and confining himself not only to the real truth, but to the bare and naked truth. He had such a horror of the overcolouring of facts of which the advocates of missions have been sometimes accused, that he did not always give to his statements the true and adequate colours of life, so that justly to estimate his work, we must often look at it rather as it was judged of by others, than as it was regarded by himself.

The sequel of the history, as regards that brief day of grace for Chang-chow, is sad and tragical. In October 13th of the same year he writes:—

“When I wrote in May, I made allusion to an interesting missionary visit which I had paid, in company with members of the native church here, to a large city in this neighbourhood—Chang-chow. I also mentioned that the American Mission here had the view of establishing permanently an out-station there, and were about to send two of their native assistants for that purpose. The sequel to this proposal, which is of a very affecting kind, and very different from what we had looked for, I have not yet mentioned to you. About the middle of May the native assistant, whom I have alluded to as co-operating with me here, went to Chang-chow along with another belonging to the same mission, and rented, as a place of meeting, the house of the man whom I alluded to in my May letter as having, in April, received us into his house, and taken some interest in our work. They had gone but two days when the local rebellion broke out in this neighbourhood, and had had in Chang-chow but one Sabbath’s services when the insurgents reached that city. The man who had rented them his house took

part with the insurgents, which led the native brethren to remove their lodgings to another place, that they might not be involved. When the insurgents had got possession of the city but two days, in consequence of their showing a disposition to rob and plunder, the populace on a sudden rose *en masse* upon them, and put nearly all who were within the city to an instant death! How little did we suppose when in April preaching the gospel in these streets, that in the course of a short month they were to be flowing with human blood! At the time of this awful massacre both the native brethren from Amoy were within the city; and as being strangers, from the same part of the country as the insurgents, they were in imminent danger of being reckoned as belonging to them, and sharing in their dreadful end. The one who is now here early saw his danger, and with difficulty made his escape, by dropping from the city walls. The other, a native of Canton province, was more fearless, being in company with some friends engaged in business in Chang-chow. He also did escape at this time, although not without much danger; but having delayed to leave the city, as his companion wished him, and return to Amoy, he was the following morning, on a sudden, arrested by a band of the populace, and, despite all his friends could do, was dragged before the mandarin, and instantly beheaded! His companion having separated from him the day before this occurred, and with great difficulty made his way home to Amoy, it was several weeks before we heard of the affecting event. Nor was this all,—the man who had rented them his house, having openly joined the insurgents, was seized in the street by the populace, and publicly beheaded! This was the melancholy end of one who, though not a man of good character among his countrymen, had a few weeks before welcomed us in our mission, joined us in all our services, and seemed to have, at least, the joy of a stony-ground hearer, if nothing more. Since that time the people of Chang-chow city have been engaged in almost constant fighting with the insurgent party; and although the insurgents have not been able again to recover the city, yet to the present hour it is so shut up, that almost no communication can be carried on between it and Amoy. The sufferings of its inhabitants have been, and still are, very great. A native of the city who had become interested in the gospel message, and who, as well as other two, came down to Amoy in April on purpose to hear it more fully, was also in great peril of being seized and put to death, like the others. His house was surrounded by armed men, and he only made his escape by getting through the roof, and running along the tops of the houses; with difficulty, after some weeks of wandering, he got here, and has remained under this roof since; it being still unsafe for him to return home.”

But the fire thus kindled at Chang-chow was never wholly extinguished. Fanned by the occasional visits of other missionaries, and by the fostering care of the neighbouring native church of Chioh-bey in connection with the American Board, it still burned on with more or less of vitality and fervour through all the changes of an outwardly checkered and disastrous history. Persecution came, but only braced and purified the more the faith of the little flock. The house in which they were assembled was more than once assaulted by ruffians, the furniture broken, and the roof, door, and windows almost riddled with stones; yet the constancy of the believers remained unshaken, and the number of inquirers increased. At length “in January, 1862, Mr. Douglas visited the city in company with one of the American brethren,

and had the privilege of baptizing six men, the first-fruits of this long and perilous sowing time of more than eight years, and soon after four more were baptized.”<sup>2</sup> The last glimpse we have of Chang-chow is a singularly sad one. First taken by the Nanking rebels towards the close of 1864, and then retaken by the Imperial forces early in the next year, it suffered so terribly from the destructive violence of both, as to be reduced to a scene of utter desolation. “I remained,” says one of the missionaries, who visited it soon after its recapture, “within the walls for three hours, and walked through a great part of the city. It is one mass of ruins, and I know it is within the mark for me to say that not ten houses out of a hundred are left standing. The large suburbs outside the west and south gates are entirely destroyed. There were a few persons inside attempting to clear away the rubbish; but, alas! how different from the streams and crowds of people I once had to jostle my way through! I never saw a sacked city before, and I trust I may never see another. No human being can give you an idea of the harrowing sight. Here and there we would come upon a woman sitting weeping over the ruins of what was once her home,—weeping bitterly. On asking one or two such persons some questions, we would find that husband, sons, all were gone, and she alone left to mourn the bitter loss. We entered the once famed Chang-chow with a sad heart, and left it with a sadder.”

But there still linger amongst the ruins the remnants of a people whose hopes are not bound up with the wreck of their earthly homes, but who “look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

Of date March 12th, 1853, and exactly a month before his visit to Chang-chow, I find the following brief entry in his journal, in reference to a department of work of a very different kind, but which had been occupying much of his time and thoughts for several months past:—

“In the great mercy and by the gracious and constant aid of the Lord and Saviour I was enabled on the 10th to complete the last revised copy of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim* (1st part) in Chinese, which has occupied us from June 1st, 1852, until now, with the exception of a month at the end of last summer, when through feverish sickness I was obliged to lay it aside. The whole has been looked over by Messrs. Doty and A. Stronach with their teachers, and the work has been benefited by a number of their suggestions. *One hour* after finishing the last sheet in the form in which it will be printed, I received from Shanghai a copy of the *Pilgrim* in Chinese, printed two years ago by Mr. Muirhead of the London Society, chiefly for the use of pupils. It is not, however, a continuous translation of the whole.”

This work was to him in a very eminent degree a labour of love. The admiration and love of early years grew upon him, as the studious care of a

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<sup>2</sup> *Narrative of the Mission to China, &c.*, by D. Matheson, Esq., PP. 46, 47.

translator brought him into closer contact with the thoughts and more intimate sympathy with the spirit of the wondrous dreamer. It was a subject of continual interest to watch the effect of the mystic allegory on another mind, and especially on a Chinese mind. One graphic incident of this kind I remember his telling me a year or two afterwards. When occupied with the inimitable portraiture of Ignorance, the Chinese teacher, who was working with him, and who was then only half a Christian, was greatly taken with the flippant and copious talker, whose fluent tongue and knowledge of all subjects, physical and metaphysical, human and divine, positively enchanted him, and drew forth audible expressions of admiration and delight as he proceeded with his task; and it was only when the character had fully developed itself and the glittering tinsel fell off from the base metal beneath, that noisy approbation gave place to a silent thoughtfulness which showed that the master had achieved his object. He was pleased also to mark how in several instances the imagery of the dream fell singularly in with some of the familiar incidents of Chinese life, as in the inscriptions set up by the wayside to commemorate important events, and admonish wayfarers. The book has been since appropriately embellished with a series of very spirited illustrations by Mr. Adams, a Scottish artist, who has happily succeeded in adapting the incidents of the story to the characteristic physiognomy and costume of Chinese life.

Another task of a similar kind in which he was engaged about this time, was the editing of a collection of hymns for Chinese worship, which from the first became a great favourite, especially with the children, and has since appeared in improved and enlarged editions. During his visit to this country two years afterwards he used to talk with delight of the ardour with which the young and fervent converts used to recite or sing these hymns, especially a series of twelve didactic and practical rhymes composed by one of the London missionaries, and which, like the songs of the Reformation, had been much blessed in deepening in many hearts the lines of Christian doctrine and duty. One of these in particular I distinctly recall, with the very cadence of the tune to which he used to sing it to us in the characteristic style of his Chinese children in the faith:—

1.

Strait is the gate, and rough the way  
That leads to heaven and endless day;  
Few enter in, and very few  
Their journey to the end pursue.

2.

For we with sin's desires must fight,  
Mouth, ears, and eyes must guard aright,  
in all we do must act by rule,

Rein in the heart nor play the fool.

3

We must not covet sordid pelf  
Nor injure men to profit self,  
Must careful be to speak the truth,  
And far must flee from lusts of youth.

4.

We must not cast an envious eye  
On those whose earthly place is high,  
Nor look with proud and scornful thought  
On those who fill the meanest lot.

5.

This heart of pride must be laid low,  
We must love men, though hate they show;  
Serve God, though to our worldly loss,  
Believe in Christ, and bear his Cross.

6.

Alas! weak men, devoid of grace,  
How can we run this holy race?  
Jesus, from heaven Thy Spirit send  
To guide and help us to the end!<sup>3</sup>

Such strains as these, pealing in clear and strong, though slightly plaintive notes,<sup>4</sup> from the open verandah or housetop, would sometimes, as he told us, meet his ear, and be his first greeting as he returned at eventide from some distant field of labour.

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<sup>3</sup> Words translated from the Chinese by W. C. Burns, and amended by Rev. J. D. Burns of Hampstead, 1855

<sup>4</sup> The tendency of the Chinese to leave out all semitones imparts a character quite peculiar to the manner of rendering our familiar tunes.