

## LING CHING TING, THE CONVERTED OPIUM-SMOKER.

BY REV. S. L. BALDWIN, D.D.

In 1863, as the Rev. S. L. Binkley was preaching one day in the Mission Chapel at Ato, in the southern suburbs of the great city of Foochow, China, a man about forty years of age, seeing the chapel doors open, strayed in out of curiosity, and took a seat with the congregation. He listened with great attention to the preaching; and, at the close of the service, when all the rest of the audience had gone out, he made his way up to the altar, and said to the missionary, "Did you say that Jesus (I never heard of Him before: I don't know who He is); but did you say that He can save me from all my sins?" "Yes," replied, Mr. Binkley, "that is just what I said." "But," the Chinaman responded, "you didn't know me when you said that; you didn't know that I have been a gambler and a sorcerer for many years; you didn't know that I have been a licentious man; you didn't know that I have been an opium-smoker for twenty years, and every one knows that any man who has smoked opium for that length of time can never be cured of the habit. If you had known all this, you wouldn't have said that Jesus can save me from all my sins—would you?" "Yes," replied the missionary, "I would have said just what I did; and I tell you now that Jesus can save you from all your sins."

The poor, sinful Chinaman was bewildered. It seemed to him impossible of belief. Yet there was a charm about the very idea of a Saviour, who could deliver him from all his sins. He went away in deep thought. The next day he sought Mr. Binkley at his residence, to talk with him about this wonderful Saviour; and day after day for many days he came, examining the proofs of Christianity, and bringing his objections to be solved by the missionary. But one day he came to the missionary's study with a radiant countenance, exclaiming as he entered: "I know it! I know it! I know that Jesus can save me from my sins; for He has done it!"

He had a great battle to overcome his habit of opium-smoking, but seeking help from his new-found Saviour, he soon conquered, and said, "I don't want to smoke opium any more; I don't want to do any of the evil things I have been doing; but I want to go and tell the people of Hok-chiang that Jesus can save them from their sins." When his friends heard of his purpose, they tried to dissuade him, saying, "Don't go down there; the people are fighting there all the time; they will soon take your head off, and that will stop your preaching. If you will preach the 'foreign doctrine,' stay here at Foochow and preach it where you will be safe." But he replied, "No; I must go to Hok-chiang. The people there need the Gospel, and they are my people. I came from there, and I must go and tell them about Jesus."

There was no time for a college course or for theological training. He went out with the Word of God in his hand, and the experience of his