

careful inquirer. His friends repeatedly visited him, and tried the ordinary arts of persuasion and deception—all in vain. At last, one day, about noon, they laid their plans so adroitly as to succeed in carrying off the youth, by sheer force or violence—downing his head—cries—for help, and beating off those who came to his assistance.

For some time we could not learn what had become of him. Last week, however, a note reached me from him, dated Burdwan, about sixty miles to the north-west of Calcutta. In it he stated that, though confined, he might possibly be able to reach us by the railway, which passes close to the town of Burdwan, if he only had the means of paying for a ticket. As there is an excellent missionary of the Church of England in that quarter, I immediately wrote to him—giving him the youth's name and other particulars—and requesting his kind aid.

Now, mark the providential hand of a gracious God. The missionary, going on the evening of the day in which he received my letter, called at the houses of several respectable Hindus whom he had been accustomed to visit. He then stepped into the house of one he had never visited before. The master of it spoke to him in English; on which he asked, whether any other member of his household spoke in that language. "Yes," was the reply; "there is a youth," pointing to a boy in the corner of the apartment "who speaks English too." On this the missionary addressed the youth—asked his name, and where he had learned English, &c. "To his great joy and surprise, he discovered that this was the very youth about whose violent capture I had written to him. He gave him what was needful to take him to Calcutta. The boy soon made his escape; he is now here, stronger than ever in his hatred of Hinduism and attachment to the gospel, and in all probability, will be baptized next Sabbath.

In this way is the Lord adding another and another to the Church of such as shall be saved. Verily, this is the dispensation of election. The cardinal law of the present kingdom of grace still is—"many called but few chosen." And is this the law ordained by the great King, why should we, in our ignorant impatience, so act as if we were dissatisfied with it, or frowned upon it with unbelieving disdain? Are we not apt to forget, that, in some way or other, God's glory is to shine forth in a proclaimed gospel, whether it prove a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death? That the gospel is to be proclaimed *as a witness* unto all nations, is undoubted—for the Lord hath said it, and modern missions are rapidly verifying the saying, in a way of marvellous literality. But while, in all cases, it is sure to prove a witness for God, may it not be equally sure to prove, in many, perhaps the majority of cases, a witness against guilty, depraved, unbelieving man?

But come what may, ours is the duty now—the imperative duty—to proclaim it aloud everywhere, whether men hear, or whether they forbear—and so wipe their blood from our own souls.—Yours affectionately,

ALEXANDER DUFF.

#### ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—CHINA.

The following extract from a letter from the Rev. C. Douglas missionary at Amoy will show the trials and discouragements as well as encouragements which the missionaries among the heathen have to experience.

REV. CARSTAIRS DOUGLAS TO THE TREASURER.

Amoy June 16th, 1859.

MY DEAR MR. MATHEWSON.—On the first Sabbath of this month we had the Communion at Pechua. On the forenoon of the same day they devolved on me a most painful duty, the first

time in my short experience of mission work (oh, art it might be the last!), namely, to read in the congregation the sentence of excommunication against two of the Pechua members. They had long been living under suspension; the one for opium-smoking, the other for making articles for idolatrous use. In the course of many months neither of them showed the least sign of penitence, nor would even come near the ordinances of public or private worship. Attempts to deal with them were in vain; so that, three weeks before the Communion, Mr. Burns and I held a judicial meeting of the little church (as there are not yet any elders) at which it was decided that these two men should be formally excommunicated on the communion Sabbath, unless in the interval their conduct should show cause for delay: this was intimated to them and also to the congregations of Maping and Pechua on the intervening Sabbath, that special prayer might be made for the offenders. These endeavours having no result it remained only to read the sentence of the Church at the morning devotion of public worship according to a form which had been carefully prepared by Mr. Talnage, and used some months ago at Amoy, wherein the Scriptural authority of church discipline was set forth, the offenders formally excommunicated, and the members solemnly warned to take heed to themselves, and still to seek the recovery of those who had fallen.

At the same church-meeting which is mentioned above, two others of the members were suspended, each of them, besides other matters, having confessed to opium-smoking. One of these two is showing a very good spirit under this discipline, so that we hope it may be blessed to him; but the fourth, who was for a long time chapel-keeper, and a few months an assistant, gives little or no ground of hope; he has been several times specially referred to in our letters, and was last year dismissed from employment. Yet the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save. It is since Mr. Burns's return that it has become possible to use these divinely appointed means for the purifying of the Church; and it seems that there is more of a blessing coming down on other members. Some also, who had removed to other places, have returned to live at Pechua. As one result of this improvement, and as a means towards greater progress, we are seeking guidance by prayer and consultation as to the appointing of elders and deacons. Amoy has long enjoyed this privilege; and last month our American brethren ordained three elders and three deacons at Chieh-bey, one of these Chieh-bey elders being one of the original Pechua converts, who was specially useful in founding the Chieh-bey Church, and who has continued to be employed there ever since. Thus encouraged, we hope that the way may be opened for doing the same at Pechua; but one difficulty remains; if the two places have separate Sessions we fear there may not be a sufficient suitable number of men; if they be conjoined the distance may be too great for convenient working. The country around has for many months suffered excessive drought, but these two or three days abundant showers are falling. Oh that we may experience the spiritual counterpart of these floods of water on the parched ground.

Last Sabbath, Mr. Doty being unable for work, Mr. Grant preached his first public sermon in Chinese, and was well understood.

At that time I was at Anhui, where I now go generally twice a month. Not that I would yet call it a station; but we are watching earnestly to see whether the interest and desire to hear which exist there be really the work of God's Spirit, such as to call for the permanent occupation of the place. We have not yet rented any house, but have just, from time to time, "borrowed" (to translate literally the Chinese word) three different places for tempor-

ary use, at a low rate. While there I always stay in the Gospel boat, which is able to lie close to the main street of the town. In my absence I always leave perhaps two more commonly three, of the young men to meet with the inquirers, and to preach the word around. No one is yet regularly appointed to that place.

This last time I went with special anxiety; for a letter had just arrived from the assistants left there, asking special prayer to be made for them and the work there, because a large placard on red paper had been posted up in many places through the town, of which the following is a translation:—"Anhui. Public Prohibition. It is not permitted in any place to let a house to the foreigner to make a hall for worship. Those who offend shall be punished in general meeting. The foreigners wish to injure China to an extent very difficult to tell fully. You must on no account join that religion; also you must not listen to them preaching. If in your houses you have remaining any foreign books you must very speedily burn and destroy them. Those who do not believe this will afterwards repent, but find it too late."

The letter arrived in time for the monthly prayer-meeting, and the matter was specially remembered both in the Chinese and English meetings. On reaching Anhui we found that the placard had not been issued by any authority, and apparently not even by any men of influence. It had produced no evil effect except that one man who had thought of renting us a house now held back, but others seem willing. The people came to hear, and asked for books fully as much as before, and the little company who assemble each evening for worship seemed rather advancing in regularity and earnestness. There are now eight or nine who thus come every evening; several of them come in the morning also, or spend some time during the day receiving instructions. One or two have also got the length of keeping the Sabbath: a lad of eighteen was beaten by his father for so doing, but came still as usual. There are also two boatmen in the passage boats between Anhui and Chang-chew who seem much impressed, and bear a good deal of ill-usage from their comrades. The man whose wife died is now well, and his children are better; his name deserves to be mentioned, it is A-LAT. The old woman, whose son drove her out of doors, has been received back by the unfilial man; she cannot come to worship, however, as there is yet no other female to accompany her.

#### PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL IN ITALY

Sardinia is at present the country upon which the eyes of Christendom are fixed with greatest interest. She has been in the enjoyment of a considerable degree of political and religious liberty since 1849, and it must certainly be regarded as a subject of much congratulation among Protestants, that in consequence of her greater participation in the blessings of liberty, the progress of true and undefiled religion among her population has been very considerable. The following accounts of the growth of Protestantism within her borders, as well as in the neighboring Italian States, will be read with great satisfaction.

A Protestant, a native of Sardinia, who has emigrated to America, uses the following language concerning his native land. "During the visit that we recently paid to our beloved country, after several years of absence, we were witness to wonderful scenes—to an awakening which, comparatively speaking, is not inferior to the great religious revival now taking place in the United States of America.—We found churches organized almost throughout the whole of the Sardinian Kingdom, even