

II. FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE "DAY-SPRING BOARD."

Rev. James Cooh, D.D., of Sydney, a leading minister of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, and successor to the late Rev. Dr. Steele as secretary of the Dayspring Board; a Board appointed not by any of the Colonial Assemblies, but by the New Hebrides Mission Synod, consisting of all the missionaries in the group; a Board by which, according to its own report—"The maritime service for the Mission is managed" and which arranged for the steam service now doing the work of the Mission, and for which the Mission Synod at its meeting a few weeks ago, gave the Board its hearty thanks; writes under date March 19th, 1894, as follows:—

"The Dayspring Board does not contemplate purchasing a steamer for the Mission. The Board has not recommended such a proposal, and, so far as we see at present, we are not in favor of such a thing. The cost of running such a steamer would be from £4,500 to £5,000" (in round numbers \$22,500 to \$25,000) "per annum; and the Board is not prepared to recommend the churches to incur that responsibility. Even if the funds were provided, we think it is too much to spend in that way. The wants of the Mission can be supplied at a much smaller figure by such an arrangement as is at present in force."

I leave the above extracts without further comment, and leave your readers to form their own opinions.

Permit me in closing to state that the present service is a line of steamers running between Australia and the Fiji Islands, which calls at Anseba, while a smaller steamer, connecting with this line, runs around the group, calling twice at each mission station, every ten weeks, and combines commerce with the work of the mission. The "Dayspring" report for 1893, for a similar service to that present running, gives the expenditure as £1,972, (\$9,860.)

E. SCOTT.

MONTREAL, August 9th, 1894.

A May Day on the Shaft of a Cart in Honan.

BY REV. DONALD MACOILLIVRAY.

FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

AND what does the shaft of a cart in this case mean? It means that very broad board fixed across the shafts of a Chinese cart upon which layers of much bedding are laid, on top of which sits the carter, when he does not care to walk. His legs may hang over the shaft on one side. If the "guest" feels that the inside of the vehicle is too confining, he may let his legs hang over the other side, and a very comfortable seat it is. So let not the gentle reader imagine that it is necessary to possess the roosting apparatus of a hen in order to view the passing scene "from the shaft of a cart;" this seat is undoubtedly the best for the purpose.

As we jog along, certainly the most striking sight to a stranger is the villages, a few with walls, most without, dotted all around your horizon. It is rarely possible to look in any direction and see a clear horizon, where fields and sky touch. It is almost certain that the clump of trees which every hamlet possesses will rise up between you and space. This month the houses, so monotonously clay-colored, are hidden to a distant spectator by a lovely veil of green. Mother Earth, from which the houses have been formed, at this season mercifully covers over her off-spring. The natives, though proof against sunstroke, appreciate this shade during dog-days, but still more do they appreciate the cash value of wood in a country whose only forests are the village trees.

But the green of the village trees itself now rises out of an almost continuous expanse of green wheat, at this season out in ear. No fences divide the glorious expanse, and it is a flat country. Before the green comes how dreary the scene! The land is brownish-yellow, the villages, made out of the land, are brownish-yellow, and if a dust-storm is blowing, the very blue of heaven is hidden away under the same eye-warying hue. Truly the chanter has been abroad in the land to work all this change. A rare patch of yellow

among the green reminds the foreigner of the sluggard's field, in which wild mustard is allowed to grow in Canada. Not so in China. No weeds here escape the diligent hand of the peasant, to interfere with honest grain. Mark that, ye Canadian farmers! What then is this yellow plant? It is the rape. Its seeds yield oil for food or lighting, and they are reaping it now, partly pulling, partly cutting. With what instrument? The same as they will use to cut down this wheat, a blade three inches long upon a handle three feet long. Will we ever see foreign reapers and self-binders reap these acres? No, never, because the people are too numerous and very small proprietorship universal. When the grain is ripe John's numerous family swarms out, young and old, male and female, and his ancestral acres are soon bare, very bare.

The road we pass over is on the whole good, but recent rains have made some bad spots. We see a cart standing still with no one in sight, the mules improving their chance by peacefully helping themselves to the green wheat. But presently we come to a companion cart with one wheel down to the hub in the mud. The drivers have united their strength on the cart in distress. The country road system of China cannot be said to be good, but to those who have only heard of their state, on actual experience it is surprising to find that they are as good as they are. They have never been surveyed or fixed, save by the travelling public, and as no fences confine them, they may change their bed from time to time according to the weather. A section that becomes really too bad for a Chinaman will be abandoned for a strip of harder ground, even though that may mean a slice off some poor man's field. He may protest by digging shallow trenches across the new road-way, but if the public disregard these he has nothing for it, but to submit. A sad sight is the passing of a refugee's barrow. A refugee from what? From the wolf at the door which came with the flood that destroyed his crops and wrecked his abode, or with the famine which gives "cleanness of teeth"! These pinched, despairing faces, they are easily recognized. The man pushing a barrow in which the sorry remnant of his goods, a cooking pot, a straw mat, some rags or perhaps a child unable to walk. At some distance behind hobble along the small-footed women. Whether are they going? To some distant relative's, or where they hear crops have been good, they scarcely know whither—driftwood, truly. This section of misery serves to remind us that although the "prospect pleases," for it is God's handiwork undecayed, unseen and largely unseeable is the desolation sin hath wrought upon him who was made in God's image.

Letter from Mexico.

LEON, Mexico, July 2nd, 1894.

TYPHUS fever usually runs its course in fourteen days, but with your correspondent it remained thirty. Although terribly reduced in flesh and strength he is thankful to be able, after about three months, to write you again, and in part resume work. God has wonderfully answered prayer in snatching us both from the very jaws of death. During extended trials of severe illness, our beloved Lord and Master continued supplying faith and hope; thus feeding the springs of peace and joy. Though unable to see how, "We know that all things are working together for good."

Our good physician—Dr. Prevost—insisted that we must move to a lower latitude and more healthful climate. In this circumstance there may be a strange and wonderful providence. Ignorant of our intense desire some months ago to live and work in this very city as a centre, our physician strongly recommended it as a place where we would be likely to regain health and strength. The mission does not feel able to undertake any new work (having more now than can properly be attended to without increased missionary force) and the idea of locating here was discouraged and laid aside. Whatever be the result, we are here seeking to regain lost health, secure a working knowl-

edge of the language and hoping at the same time to sow a little of the good seed of the Kingdom. We arrived about a month ago and are living "in our own hired house" in the midst of probably upwards of 100,000 people (sometimes reported 250,000) many of whom would, no doubt, consent to our death if not help to kill us. Think of this great city without a missionary, native pastor or Protestant church and so far as our knowledge goes, not a single professing Protestant outside our house. Reports indicate extreme fanaticism which has baffled the efforts of several denominations.

Our neighbours are intensely curious to know who we are, where we came from, what our occupation and why we are here. We seem to be genuine curiosities—being the only American family in the city. As we walk in the street we frequently hear the familiar "Mira! Mira!" (look! look!) while people rush to windows and doors or gather in groups on the sidewalk to feast their eyes on the interesting "whites" who, in turn, find difficulty in preventing strong vocal and facial expression as they observe many mouths as well as eyes wide open. Some inordinately curious individuals will follow us home, and we are quite accustomed to groups peering through our parlor windows to watch our movements, ten or fifteen minutes at a time.

Even though we be allowed to remain but a few months, and no effort be ever made to establish a church, we will have a taste of ice-breaking in the Foreign Mission Field where there is no congregation to hang on the preacher's words, no society of Christian workers to whom he and his wife can appeal for prayer and work, and no individual to whom they can look for sympathy. We trust the experience will be profitable.

Since street preaching is prohibited by law, our only hope of doing anything is through direct personal effort. With all its discouragements this work is pleasant and promising. Our first and best friend is a young cargador (baggage man and labourer) who met us at the depot, took baggage to hotel, assisted in finding a house, transferred household effects from station to our new home, etc. Incidentally with a purpose, instances of answered prayer and evidences of Christ's love were mentioned. Soon a little book of daily Scripture texts was accepted. He somehow learned that we were Protestants and his long absence aroused fears that he had passed beyond our influence. We believe the Holy Spirit led him back to ask for a copy of the New Testament which he prizes highly, carries it in his pocket and reads as opportunity presents itself. He comes frequently to ask the meaning of parts he has read. He has joined us in family worship, staying till late bed-time, to study the Bible. As the Word is read or explained he often says "Es verdad! Es muy clara!" (it is true! it is clear!). The truth seems to be taking hold of his heart.

The little motherless boy of a brilliant young army officer, living next door, spends much time with us and we hope some good will result. We feel special interest in a very poor but earnest old lady who does occasional work in our house. One day she expressed great surprise because Mrs. D. did not wear the beads, without which she was taught no one could possibly be saved. Next time she came she asked if we were Catholics.

She still thinks we are very good people and have a very happy home and asks if all Americans are the same. Being seriously ill she resolved, last eve, that to-day she would confess and take the sacrament, but intimated to our servant later, that if my wife could be so good and happy in going directly to God in prayer, she would trust Him likewise. Our servant, having joined the church while with us in Zacatecas, is sympathetic and helpful. Here let me add that although absent she is contributing 25 cents per month of her \$3 wages. Our parlor windows serve as temporary pulpits and some of our hearers come expecting to sell their wares, some (especially boys and neighbour women) are apparently led by irresistible curiosity, while others come hoping to have all their earthly needs supplied