

siderable extent owing to the spontaneous efforts of the native Christians among their heathen neighbours. Thus, into the village of Bay-pay, mentioned in the following communication, the Gospel was first introduced by Chinese Christians from Peh-chuia, and now in its turn Bay-pay has passed on the lamp of life to Liong-Bun-soo.

I think your readers will be struck by Mr. Swanson's letter. The state of things which it describes is wonderful, and earlier in the history of Chinese evangelisation it would have been hailed with rapture. We used to call the Chinese apathetic and immovable; if so, this preparedness of their minds and this avidity for the Gospel are all the more signally the Lord's own doing. But it is very distressing to see such an open door, and not to have strength to enter in. Our missionary staff is very small, and it has lately been over-worked. We would fain send into this over-ripe harvest more labourers, but with the funds at our disposal we can send no more.

Then follows the letter:—

"At Khi-boe, I found that our chapel was nearly finished, and that we could meet there for public worship. I had been hearing from our agents that the numbers of those who had been keeping the Sabbath had greatly increased since my former visit, but I was not so sanguine as some of them seemed to be. You may judge of my feelings when on the Sabbath I found myself surrounded by a congregation of more than 150 souls. These were all seated, and joined with us in worship, and are quite exclusive of a crowd of listeners who thronged windows, doors, and every available hearing place. I cannot tell what the result of this may be; I know God has his own ones among them, and I fear some are driven to come and join us with no higher motive than the hope that we may be able in some way, to protect them from the unjust, cruel, and oppressive exactions of their magistrates. I do trust that God may grant them the grace of his Spirit to lead them to the sure and only refuge. Our chapel is too small for the numbers of those who even now keep the Sabbath. But we must wait ere we think of making any modifications. I need not ask you to lay this matter before God's ruling people.

"On my return from Khi-boe I went to Bay-pay. I had for some time been much encouraged by an increase to the numbers of our inquirers there. Among these inquirers were four persons from a village five miles distant from Bay-pay in a south-west direction. It is now nearly six months since these persons became interested in the Gospel, and they have for that time maintained a consistent profession. In their native village, called *Liong-Bun-soo*, they were most

zealous in preaching the Gospel to their neighbours. The result was, that about six weeks ago, the original four were one Sabbath accompanied by other fifteen persons of the village, and on the following Sabbath by twenty-nine persons, all males. I was absent from Amoy when these facts took place, but one of the preachers immediately communicated with me, telling me that the whole village, with the exception of one or two persons, had renounced idolatry, and were keeping the Sabbath, that many had broken their idols or burned them, and that some had destroyed their ancestral tablets. You may imagine what were all our feelings when we heard this news. I set out last week for Bay-pay, with no immediate purpose of visiting the village, as I desired much that the native agents (two of whom I had sent) should be as zealous as possible in instructing them. But after preaching in the morning at Bay-pay, the brethren there pressed on me to set out for the village. I did so, and got there just as they were about to commence their afternoon service. Before I entered the village I saw something I have never before seen since I left my own dear Scotland. There was a solemn stillness all around, and while at every village I passed on my way, young and old, were busy reaping, no one was in the field here, not even an ox or a buffalo. On entering the village, I found the oxen all tethered in a row, eating straw, and thus kept that all might get to worship. I cannot describe to you the reception I got. Poor people, they rushed about me, and with the most lively demonstrations of joy, welcomed me. I was to them the representative of One whom, I trust, many among them have learned to prize. I was so struck and overcome with such a sight, that my feelings I cannot express. We met in the open air, and I preached to them from the first part of the 3rd chapter of John. It was with the utmost difficulty they would allow me to leave them. Young and old planted themselves in the village gates, and opposed my going; and it was only when I told them that there were others of their countrymen who had claims upon us, that they were willing to let me go. I have told you the plain facts of this most unprecedented case, that you may know what are our joys and our sorrows. I cannot tell what the result will be; that is known only to God. But one thing is plain, and that is our duty.—We must watch over them and instruct them.

"We live thus, my dear Mr. Matheson, in the midst of very solemn and stirring times. God is shining on this mission in a most wonderful way, and I do trust that the Church will be aroused to a sense of her responsibilities.

"I cannot now write more than simply