

Victoria I could not secure a teacher and the dialects are quite as different as those in Britain already referred to—I think more so—and Cantonese bears to these dialects much the same relation that English does to the Cornish, etc.

3. As incidental advantages in being here. (a) I expect to come in contact with native workers with the prayer that the great Head of the Church will raise up a man "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" to serve both as a preacher and to assist me in continuing my studies in the Cantonese. For be it remembered the five months more or less which I may be able to spend here is little more than a beginning. The missionaries who came here to labor are allowed two years to the study of the language before they assume active duties. I am so thankful to state here, that I have reason to believe I have made very encouraging progress since I came, in the Vernacular. I think the eight weeks here is quite equal to eight months at home. (b) I hope to be able to visit the districts about 100 miles from here, from whence nearly all the Chinese in America hail and hope thereby to gain knowledge that will help me in getting nearer to those poor strangers in our land.

Now that I have been permitted to cross the Rubicon and come to China I am much encouraged in heart. True I have given up much to come here, true the task is not yet accomplished—I am only wrestling daily and hourly with this strange language as with a begrudging miser who will only yield one secret at a time, and that provided with wings ready to fly away if lost sight of for a moment; true, also the work for which I am preparing if God spares me, is, humbly speaking as difficult probably as any on the face of the globe to-day. Nevertheless my soul is on the "high places," I feel thankful, strong and full of hope. Why? Because I am getting a chance to get the language of the people among whom I labor, and I believe the good Lord is loosening my tongue, and will yet permit me to speak His own precious, powerful and everlasting Word to the Chinese in Canada. Oh! with what joy I contemplate "holding forth the Word of Life," to the "strangers within our gates." Oh! I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me for that he counted me faithful putting me into the ministry."

I am devoutly thankful for the clear and blessed leading of the Lord in every step of my journey and in preparing my way here. (c) As to place, I was led in a very pleasant way to Dr. J. G. Kerr's home, which he and his good wife opened to me at once. It is I think one of the very best places in this great city to which I could have come for the purpose of study. The Canton medical missionary hospital, of which Dr. Kerr has been superintendent for forty one years is immediately behind Dr. Kerr's home, in the same compound. Here a large number of patients are within my reach every day, upon whom I can practice my meagre but growing vocabulary in the effort to speak a word that may be helpful to them for "two worlds." Every morning we have a Chinese service in the hospital for half an hour, conducted by the native pastor or Dr. Henry, at which there is an average attendance, I judge of about 125. On Sabbath days we have a regular preaching service in Chinese and Bible class and on Thursday evenings the Young Men's Y.P.S.C.E., have their meeting, so that I have ample opportunity for hearing Chinese preaching, etc. It is an atmosphere of study, it is quiet and everything is done by the clock. Dr. Kerr—though he celebrated his 70th birthday a few days ago—starts out with his assistants and students to make his first rounds in the hospital wards at 6 a.m. We all rise at the same hour and begin the work of the day. I have my teacher with me except Sabbath, from nine to four with an hour for dinner. We study in the chapel where we are wholly free from any interruptions. (d) As to time. If I had been any earlier I would have arrived in the heated term. Had I reached Hong Kong even two days earlier I would have been caught in one of the heaviest typhoons that has ever visited that city. Since I came here, two or three days were oppressively warm, and reminded me that I must be very watchful or I might have a return of the sickness that incapacitated me for service when in China before. I am thankful to say that I am enjoying good health at this present. At this season the climate is well-nigh perfect, but I am warned to look for a change very soon now.

True, politically speaking it is a stormy period in which to be here and one not without threatened danger to foreign residents in this city. Last summer, owing to the plague, which many think will reappear this spring, and the declaration of war, the citizens of Canton were greatly stirred against foreigners and the feeling has not wholly subsided yet. Some of the missionaries told me that for weeks last summer they were ready to move at any moment by day or by night. The city was placarded and an attack on foreigners proposed. The attack on Dr. Halverson, by which that lady nearly lost her life, was premature, and defeated the general plan. The people have been kept in a feverish anti foreign temper by agitators who for sinister motives play upon the superstitious fears of the people and fervent trouble. Only last Sabbath day as I walked up to Sha Min, the foreign settlement about a mile from here, where I was to preach, I passed along the narrow thronged streets greeted frequently with a cry of "Foreign devil" and as I passed by a shop where some idolatrous ceremonies were being observed, one called out loudly, "Foreign devil is come, kill him! kill him!" Another called out I thought rather apologetically, "He is a Jesus believing one." I was so glad to hear that sweet name even in that connection. This is the second time they have called "kill him" after me. These may be signs of a gathering storm—and many such are reported—there may be special danger ahead of us, but one cannot forget that there has been danger for the last fifty years and more. Dr. Kerr who has been here for 41 years has seen wars, revolutions,

pestilences, famines and uprisings against foreigners from time to time through all that period and yet with two or three exceptions when he had to retreat to Macao for a brief space, he has been carrying on with a stout heart and happy, his splendid and abundant labors for the relief of human suffering and the uplifting of Jesus Christ as the only Physician of sin sick souls. There is a deal of true heroism in the mission field and all the more heroic that it is unobtrusive, unproclaimed and except to the few unknown. Last week two ladies with only the native boatmen, started from here for their station three weeks journey up the river. To day a young doctor and his wife started out with their boat for a two years journey. They will visit periodically the churches within a certain area, living altogether on their boat and healing the sick and preaching as they go. They go unprotected in any way, they know these rivers are infested with bold pirates, they know the political crisis just at hand and the anti-foreign feeling that is unwontedly intense at this present, and yet they went quietly forward filled with the perfect love and trust in God that utterly casts out fear. I do not mention these because they are special cases at all—they are not—but because they are friends to whom I have so recently said good-bye as they left us. And how rarely does anything happen to the missionaries, though a thousand and more are constantly on the move through all parts of this vast empire! We may adapt the language of the apocryphal Joshua and say: "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the land do faint because of us."

Judging from what one hears and reads, not a few people think of China as a land notorious for riots and cyclonic outbursts of anti-foreign madness; but whilst admitting that there have occurred a number of riots in the last fifty years—as in some other countries that we could name, we would nevertheless assert that the Chinese as a whole are one of, if not the most, peace-loving, law abiding people in the world. Remember that the marvels of our civilization which have grown slowly with our growth is being suddenly thrust before their astonished visions; that they are but children in knowledge of the practical sciences; that they have seen so many wonders wrought by foreigners, ships at-aiming against wind and tide, great factories throbbing with the pulse of the steam engine, men sending messages across oceans by the touch of a button and performing operations in major surgery, the patient remaining unconscious until all is over—and many other marvels, which their superstitious minds at once couple with satanic or other supernatural influences. Given this foundation and given a number of designing officials, or it may be thieves looking for plunder, who are ready to play on the credulity of the common people with the most abominable and horrible tales about foreigners, is it any wonder that these poor frightened creatures filled with their dark and wierd imaginings, should be ready to rise up when some untoward circumstance, perhaps the thoughtless act, or alas! it may be the cruel or unjust oppression of some foreigner, is used by wicked men as a match to spring the mine of their pent up feelings and hatred? They must be lacerated almost to frenzy before they will act so, but even your normal peaceable Chinaman when once aroused becomes like a ravening wild beast, a very monster of cruelty and destruction. Poor souls! they are not so much to be blamed as pitied. The blame should come on us to some extent, for had we been less greedy for gold—think of the East India Company dismissing from their service the great Morrison because he translated the Scriptures into the Chinese language and they were afraid it might injure their business, or again think of the infamous opium war, of which one cannot recall to memory a single line without a blush—I say if we had been less avaricious as a nation and had the Christians been equal to their privileges and responsibilities, China would have been probably in a very much better condition to-day. Thank God, amid all the turmoil and restiveness which this deplorable war has stirred up among the people with inevitable discouragements and hindrances to missionary work, evidences of the most blessed and convincing kind, that the Lord is working with His servants in distressed enthralled, wicked China, are abundant. At the communion service last Sabbath day in the chapel on this compound, thirteen joined by profession of faith, one an old woman of 70 years and another came with her who has only been a Christian for a short time and is 80 years old. The last was threatened by her fellow villagers with the most severe punishments but she would not recant nor deny the name of Jesus. They bound her hands behind her back and waited for her to give up the Jesus doctrine, but she remained firm. They laid her bound on the floor and sent for rods but she answered never a word. Finally they loosed her and let her go and she came into the communion with great joy. Many things of which I want to speak I must leave for another letter. I wish to express my gratitude to the dear young people of St. Andrews' church, Berlin, for their timely and valuable gift of the Micrograph (which I am now using,) just before I left for China. It will be of great service to us in our mission work in sending out invitation slips, tracts, etc., to the Chinese. These dear young friends have oft refreshed me and I am thankful to believe their own hearts are made glad in the Lord.

I cannot but speak in a word too of the comfort it gives me here in China to know that so many voluntary teachers and so many pastors in British Columbia are helping and carrying on the work among the Chinese. There the glad reward will come some day when we see these souls turning from their idols to serve the living and true God. I wish you one and all a very happy New Year, or full of promise and blessing as the days roll by.

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel,

H. B. WINCHESTER.