

books well known in England; besides treatises by Dr. De Sanctis, and other Italian writers, who have sought to lead others to the truth which they have found for themselves. Go down to Porta Nuova, and among the handsome buildings of one of the finest streets in the capital stands the Waldensian Church, no mean ornament even to that part of the city. Enter the church at three o'clock on Sabbath afternoon, and there is a perfect crowd of Italians, many of whom are evidently all unaccustomed to a Protestant service.—*News of the Churches.*

THE RECENT MEETING OF THE WALDENSIAN SYNOD AT LA TOUR.

The Synod opened on Monday the 29th of May, at 9 o'clock, A. M. The large church of La Tour was filled with such an audience as might assemble on the Sabbath day. In the front rows sat the pastors and deputies. The opening service was in Italian, as Dr. De Sanctis had been appointed to preach. According to the Waldensian form, which retains a "reader," Professor Malan read the chapters, &c., in Italian, and then, after prayer and praise, Dr. De Sanctis chose Acts x. 23, as his text of his discourse.

The text presented, he said, 1. *A duty*—"Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock." 2. *A privilege*—"Over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." 3. *An office*—"To feed the church of God." 4. *A dogma*—"The church, which he hath purchased with his own blood." He dwelt on the necessity of looking well to themselves, and to their own faith. The faith of which he spoke was not that which comes by books, by courses of logic, or Christian instruction, but which is of God and cometh from above. He bore his testimony to the truth which had been preserved in those valleys, and thanked God that he, who was not born in that church, nor educated in it, but who in God's providence belonged to it by choice, by conviction, and by duty, was enabled to bear testimony. He then spoke of the duty of taking heed to all the flock, and of the dangers with which in these days the flock was surrounded. Under the second head—their privilege as overseers appointed by the Holy Ghost—he spoke of parties who, under pretence of leading them back to primitive purity and simplicity, were seeking to set aside the pastoral office, and to lead the flock away from the "overseers" which the Holy Ghost had appointed over them. This system of mysticism, with its false pretence of primitive purity, was especially to be avoided, as it introduced disorder and confusion, and divided the flock which ought to be united in evil days. He did not enter at length on the third head—the office which was assigned to them, to feed the church of God. It was the office of "pastors," of shepherds under the chief Shepherd, to feed the flock of God, and the flock or church of God could only be fed with the Word of God. He noticed especially in reference to the pastoral office, that the same persons who were called "elders" in the 17th verse, were called "bishops" or "overseers," in the 23th. The Italian version has the right translation of the passage: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops." He concluded by merely alluding to the dogma, or doctrine, that the church which they were to feed was the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood; that is, which Christ, who is "God over all blessed for ever," has redeemed from among men. Such is a mere outline of a very excellent discourse, preached in very beautiful Italian.

There were sixty-five members present, namely, the pastors of the 11 parishes, and of the Italian stations, the Professors of the College, and two lay deputies from each parish.

The Synod closed on Friday at one o'clock, P. M. Though no Synod had sat for so long a time for two centuries, the country deputies remained till

the last. On Sabbath the communion was dispensed in all the parishes. The morning service at La Tour was in the old church at the foot of the mountain, where about 400 or 500 people communicated. M. Appia preached an excellent discourse in the afternoon, in the church at La Tour, to a large audience, and in the evening there was another crowded meeting at Santa Margherita for Italian service. M. Malan presided and opened the exposition, which was continued by M. Etienne Malan, Signor Niccolini, Mr. Hanna of Florence, and Mr. Curry of Manchester. There is truly a great work to do in this land: the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send labourers into his harvest." The concluding prayer of the evening meeting was off red by Francesco Madiai, so well known as the prisoner of Volterra. It was simple and earnest, and exceedingly affecting, especially when he thanked God who had brought him to those valleys that were stained with the blood of his martyrs, and to brethren who had prayed for him when he was in chains, for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. It is truly interesting to see the Italian element so largely represented in the Waldensian church. May that church, whose chosen emblem is the light shining in darkness, be the blessed instrument in leading many to that light which is the light of men!—*News of the Churches.*

CHINA.

In the last number of the *English Presbyterian Messenger*, we find several letters from their missionaries in China, viz: two from the Rev. W. C. Burns, and one from the Rev. Mr. Johnston. In one of his letters, Mr. Burns says:

When I last wrote, I was sojourning at a country market town, about fourteen miles (English) from Amoy. In this place, and the neighbourhood, our way was so remarkably opened that we have been there, as our headquarters, ever since (dwelling in a hired house, with preaching-hall, one dollar per month), encouraged not only by the general disposition of the people to hear the Word, but also by the special interest of a few individuals, and among these one entire family (father, mother, and three sons), who seem to be at the door of the kingdom, it they have not already entered in. A month ago, my two native Christian companions returned here for a few days, while I, with my servant, remained to keep the station open, and when, last Monday (Feb. 27th), I returned here, they, in their turn, remained behind to prosecute too work. I had been absent from Amoy exactly forty-nine days, and they were days of much mercy, and more than usual encouragement in the Lord's work among this people. I hope (D. V.) to go out again in the beginning of next week, and should we have, as there is some reason to hope for, an addition to the number of assistants from the native Church here, I may be called to go still further on to other places to which we have been invited, leaving a part of our number to maintain the station in which we have been thus unexpectedly led to open.

Mr. Johnston, in writing from Amoy, on the 18th January, gives most interesting information in regard to the country generally. We give the following extracts from his letter—

The town of Amoy, which stands on the west of the Island, is said to contain 15,000 inhabitants, most of them very poor. The streets are quite as narrow, and rather dirtier, than most other Chinese towns, but as most of them are in this respect. The shops have a poor look, and the things exposed for sale of the commonest kind, no appearance of that wealth and luxury which is to be seen in Canton.

This is partly owing, doubtless, to the recent

insurrection and siege, from which it has not yet recovered; and on all hands are to be seen proofs of the severity and barbarity of the assailants on both sides, everywhere you see houses in ruins, not from the effect of a well-directed cannonade, but the wanton cruelty and revenge of the victors. The insurgents, as soon as they succeeded, pulled down the houses of the authorities, and all public buildings, and the Mandarins, when they retook the town, pulled down the houses of the rebels, or those who had harboured them: whole villages have been destroyed in this way. In walking through the town, you see proofs of the insecurity of property and life, in the way in which those who were able to do so have built up the doors of their houses, leaving only a small opening through which a man can creep with difficulty. He who excited in gates in Amoy, during the insurrection, sought destruction; and even yet they cannot trust themselves; and the authorities seem to be very much afraid of another rising, although we can see no likelihood of it. They are frequently issuing proclamations. One of those recently issued was to prohibit all men from the ages of sixteen to sixty from wearing any red silk in their tails! It seems that the insurgents had lengthened their queues with that colour, as a badge, in the same way as the French Socialists wore the "bannet rouge."

Amoy does not seem ever to have been, or to have much prospects of becoming, a place of much commercial importance. There are no sources of mineral wealth. The surrounding country is sterile, and destitute of mineral resources, and there is no manufacturing enterprise among the people. Its imports are chiefly of the bare necessities of life, such as rice from Formosa, cotton from India, and that hateful drug, opium, the demand for which induces many to part with their all, that they may enjoy for a season its pleasing stupefaction. Sugar, and salted vegetables, and the instruments of idolatrous worship, are the chief exports, and the trade in these is, for the most part, carried on by wealthy Chinese, in the straits of Malacca, many of whom are Fokien men.

There are only six British firms established here, and they derive their chief revenues from the opium trade.

But, you will say, all this is about external and secondary matters; have you nothing to say about our Mission? I am sorry to say that I have very little to write about that; God has tried the faith and patience of our brethren, in denying them the privilege of gathering fruit in this life as yet, and at present we cannot even speak of the blossoms or budding of the spiritual vintage. Doubtless good has been done in one and another, of which it is impossible for me to speak, not having been here to witness it. I can only write of apparent results of which as my fellow-labourers tell me with grief, they are not able to speak. Diseases have been cured, the span of a few lives has been, in some cases, lengthened; opium-smokers have, in a few instances, been mercifully helped to relinquish their destructive habits, some children have been taught the elements of religious truth, and the rudiments of the English language. The seed of the Word has been scattered broadcast upon the waters, and the missionaries of other Churches have been helped in instructing their converts; and "The Pilgrim" has been sent to show the way from the Celestial region to a better, that is, an heavenly country, and, from what I hear, he walks through the land in a costume of which his Saxon brother need not be ashamed. And all this is well; we know not that the Church has a right to expect more, however much she may desire more; and it is well that the Church should know what the rate of sin is, that she may humble herself, as we humble ourselves, before God, and that she may unite with us in a more importunate supplication for the promised grace of the Spirit!