

rels of flour are sometimes used for one dinner, besides quantities of rice and other things. Hundreds of people are fed, and the cooking, singing and beating of drums are kept up the whole night long. It might occur to you that it must be difficult for poor people to provide for so many guests, but the accommodations are of the simplest. They sit on the ground in the open air, and eat with their fingers from squares of plantain leaf instead of plates. It was a lovely moonlight night that we went to the Brahmin's feast. It was only seven o'clock, but the heavy dew drops were already sparkling on the grassy path that leads from our house to his. We found a great crowd gathered. Large pots were set ready for cooking, and a number of people were preparing the food. Some were singing to the accompaniment of drums, others smoking and talking. The Brahmin himself was doing all the worshipping. He and his little son were sitting on a mat in the midst of the crowd; before them was a bamboo frame prettily draped with pure white garlands of jasmine flowers; we wondered where they could have gathered so many. Inside the frame was a little image of his god. Small lamps burned around it; two or three men strung more flowers, or handed the articles necessary for the worship, which consisted only in certain little motions and acts being done according to rule, and certain Sanskrit words or sentences repeated at the proper times. If anything is omitted or not said or done at the exact time, or if a flower is put on the right hand when it should have been on the left, the worship is said to be of no use. Sometimes the Brahmin scattered a little rice; again, he dipped a flower in coconut oil, and laid it down with great precision. What a substitute for the prayer and adoration with which the Christian religion teaches men to approach their God! Seeing that there would be no opportunity for Mr. Morton to read or to address the people, we did not remain long; no one had seemed to notice our presence beyond the usual salaam from those who received us. We sat under the projecting roof of a little cottage to avoid the falling dew; and then slipped quietly away. Soon after the Brahmin's little son was sent to our school, and he is still attending regularly. The Hindu books say there are 333,000,000 gods and goddesses, or, perhaps, it might give you a more correct idea to tell you that their many gods and goddesses are believed to have at different times manifested themselves in that number of different forms. The religious Hindu chooses for himself the particular gods to whom he will pay most respect and devotion; the same god in different forms is supposed to possess different kinds and degrees of power, and this leads to endless disputes among the different sects who exalt their own favoured deity at the expense of the rest. Yours truly,

SARAH E. MORTON.

THE ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN MISSION IN FORMOSA.

(Concluded.)

THE COLLEGE.

During the first two months of the year a number of our preachers were called to the city to the college to read, the students going out to supply their places. During that time they were taught some Old Testament history, especially regarding the time of the exile, reading together the Book of Jeremiah. They read also the life and letters of Paul as far as to the Epistle to the Romans, also something of the life of our Lord, and a little simple arithmetic to aid them in keeping church accounts. It is also helpful to them in teaching the children at the stations. The students during the year have been ten in number. They have enjoyed good health, and behaved well. We began the year with eleven, but two of them left, I wrote at the time regarding their going home. The second term we added one. They have studied together Old Testament history and the Book of Isaiah, finished the life and letters of St. Paul, and part of the First Epistle of Peter. They have also learned a little arithmetic and a little geography. Mr. Thow, when at home, continued his lectures on "Hebrews." They also read themselves a Chinese commentary in five volumes on the Gospel of Mark, by Rev. Mr. Faber, a German missionary. One hour a day they read the Bible in their own character. I am very much pleased, on the whole, with the progress they have made and the spirit they have displayed, and I am

more than ever convinced that all preachers before being sent to stations must hereafter all have a longer or shorter period in college to learn something of the Bible. Other learning they may be able to dispense with, but without this they are helpless; and their only way of getting it at present is by coming and reading with us.

Of the ten students reading at present, one is going out as a preacher. We thought of sending two others also, but concluded finally to allow them to read some time longer, feeling that though the stations may suffer temporarily from want of preachers, it will be better for the Church in the long run. We have called one young man more as a student. There are also four young men who have been scholars in the Middle School whom we think of as students. We feel, however, the difficulty of just selecting such as future ministers without any trial of them beforehand. And accordingly in their case, instead of appointing them at once as students receiving \$3 per month for their expenses, we have invited them to come and read in college, giving them their food without any money, in the expectation that if they display real zeal they may become regular students; and if they appear, after a year's trial, unsuitable, they may return home without the stigma of having been dismissed from college, all the better as private Christians of their year's study. This is a matter regarding which we much desire the prayers of friends, that we may be guided aright in the choice of suitable students, so that the future ministers of the Church may be true servants of our Lord.

THE HOSPITAL.

The hospital was carried on by Dr. Lang until his departure for the mainland in October. During the interval between his departure and the arrival of Dr. Anderson in November, the hospital was carried on by the three dispensers, with a weekly visit from Dr. Myers, of Takow. We hope Dr. Lang is preparing a report of the year's work for publication, and that he has already sent you a statement.

Regarding the site for the new hospital buildings, we are sorry to be unable to report progress. We received a few days ago a despatch from our Consul stating that the magistrate refused to stamp the deeds of purchase, as the neighbouring people object on the ground of Feng-shuy. The real difficulty, we believe, lies in the opposition of an influential Chinaman in the neighbourhood. We are in hopes that perhaps his opposition may be got over "for a consideration;" we do not consider that there is really any very strong popular objection to our acquiring the site.

PRINTING PRESS.

This has been in operation during the year. At present we have three printers employed; there is sufficient work for them all, though I have sometimes not leisure to oversee their work. The main work has been the regular printing of the monthly *Church News*—thirteen numbers this year owing to the intercalary month. The value of this periodical is still found to be great. We print about 700 copies monthly, of which more than 200 are sent to Amoy, and 100 to Tamsui. The other main piece of work has been printing portions of the New Testament as revised by various missionaries for circulation and further revision by other missionaries. During the past year we have in this way printed Philipians, the Acts of the Apostles, and part of 2nd Corinthians. We have also printed a small geography with maps rendered into our vernacular from Chinese character by Mr. Ede, also Dr. Lang's hospital report for 1886. The proceeds from the sales, together with balance from last year, supplemented by a donation of \$24 from Mr. Thow, were sufficient to defray current expenses, including \$124 of wages to printers. By the kindness of friends at home also we were enabled to purchase more type, so that this year the press has cost the mission nothing. If we had more time to see to the preparation and printing of suitable literature, our press would be found to be an instrument of great value for raising the intelligence of the native Church, and conveying to them important knowledge. We have now in Amoy and Formosa a large number of readers who welcome new publications.

With regard to our work in general we feel that there is real ground for thankfulness on account of what has already been attained, and for much thankfulness for the many hopeful openings for usefulness which the position attained opens up to us. But to do anything like justice to the work already in hand,

and still more to take advantages of the opportunities which God is giving to us, much hard work is required, which, in the present condition of our mission staff, is quite impossible. We are sorry to require always to refer to this matter, but the present state of things causes us much anxiety. It is only Mr. Thow's self-denying resolution, come to in opposition to the advice of one medical man at least, to remain one year longer on the field, that has saved the mission from something like a catastrophe. Had he gone home this spring in course, the result would have been that the college would have been closed, and the publication of the *Kau-hoe-po* interrupted, or, at least, irregular; whilst the general work of the Church would have been much hindered through the natural unwillingness of one ordained missionary to take any fresh action on his own responsibility. We are sure that it is not the wish of the friends at home that so extended a work as ours should be cared for by only one ordained missionary; and we would respectfully suggest that very effectual steps should be taken with a view to the immediate strengthening of the staff. May God prepare a very fit instrument to come here and carry on his work!—Rev. T. Barclay.

NOT long ago, says the *Chicago Interior*, we called attention to some remarkable instances of unselfishness, liberal giving and downright sacrifices in the interest of Gospel preaching in the far west. Certain Presbyterian farmers out there give as much for the maintenance of church services as they give to keep themselves and their families sheltered, clothed and fed. Now we hear of like liberality on the part of some devout Baptists in England; indeed, the figures for the latter's gifts are exceptionably remarkable. For instance, a governess who earns \$500 a year gives half of that sum to missions and other church causes; a man who earns \$6,000 a year lives on 600 and gives away the rest; one with an assured income of \$10,000 a year, spends one-tenth on himself and remits nine-tenths to the Lord; and another, whose annual income is \$40,000 a year, keeps only \$1,250 for his personal use and pleasure and consecrates \$38,750 to missionary and charitable uses! In these English cases the issue is clearly made between self and the Lord the self-denying givers not having family responsibilities and obligations resting upon them, as have our hard working western farmers. But love to God and a passionate desire to advance His kingdom in this world are shown by all of them.

A SCOTTISH exchange, writing on the Church and social questions, remarks: No fewer than five Diocesan Conferences were in session last week, and the important place occupied by social questions in the programme of each forms one of the most striking signs of our time. At Lincoln the debate on the duty of the Church with respect to socialism was particularly outspoken. The bishop declared that the question was one which affected most powerfully the mind and the spiritual condition of the world. Hedeprecated the views of those who regard it with an imperturbable optimism. Socialism is not a movement to be suppressed without a hearing or by force. The bishop favours that course which would disarm the dangerous classes by improving their condition; and the influential members of the laity as well as the clergy who took part in the animated discussion were practically of the same mind. At Wells there was an instructive debate on "Thrift;" and the report of a committee on the subject insisted upon the more independent supervision of trustee savings banks, which have done good work at half the cost of the post office savings banks, though the committee believe that the more absolute security provided by the latter will ultimately tend to the absorption of the former in the post office banks. There can be no question that the subject of thrift is one of the great social problems of the day. Out of a population of 35,000,000 or 36,000,000 only 2,000,000 belong to a good friendly society. About ten per cent. of the whole population receive at some period of their lives relief from the poor-rates; while 42.7 out of every 100 of such persons die as paupers receiving indoor or outdoor relief. One reflection suggested by these discussions it would be unfair to leave unexpressed. They are infinitely some searching and practical than most of the debates in the Presbyterian Church Courts. If we compare them with the personalities and twaddle which seem to engross most of the time of certain Presbyteries the result is assuredly greatly to the credit of the Diocesan Conference.