

schools, and the new "Douglas Memorial Church" were all within sight, at short distances from each other.

You can imagine how busy the following days were, seeing the mission and its manifold operations, seeing also the missionaries and missions of the other two societies which labour in Amoy. These missionaries received us almost as warmly as our own Scotch friends did; and happier days I cannot recall than those we were privileged to spend in the midst of the pleasant, united, cheery mission circles of Amoy, and I must add, Swatow—but of Swatow you shall hear afterwards. It must have a letter to itself. I use the word *united*, for nothing struck us more than the perfect harmony and brotherly love which reigned among these dear China missionaries; and it was the same wherever we went. We have indeed laid up great store of pleasant memories during our wanderings, and none are pleasanter or more fragrant than those which cluster thick and bright in connection with our visits to Amoy and Swatow.

As you know, a great deal of the work of these missions lies outside in the country stations, consequently we could not see nearly so much of it as we wished. It had been a dream of mine to go out and visit one of the stations, and see the native work, pure and simple. Our friends, however, thought the scheme impracticable at that season. The seas were rough; we should have to face the waves in an open boat; the Chinese houses were cold and comfortless; and above all, there was hardly time. But this shewed the roughing our missionary brethren have to go through. We had to give up Formosa for the same reasons. "You may go and not be able to land," said our kind monitor, Mr. Swanson; and so we did as we were told.

Of these country stations, there are forty-eight under the Presbytery of Amoy. These are scattered all over the districts where the Amoy dialect is spoken; for the object of the missionaries is to carry the glorious Gospel of the blessed God everywhere into the heart of the country, and to the homes of the people. There are sixteen congregations fully organized, and two more will soon be added. Some of these have ordained native pastors set over them, and others are ministered to by evangelists and the students of the theological class, of whom there are eighteen. All the congregations are being taught the grand lesson of self-support, and some are now quite self-supporting; while every church and station is trained to the duty and privilege of *giving* for the spread of the Gospel among their country people. They quite comprehend what is meant by home mission work.

But I ought to have explained that the Presbyterian Church of Amoy is a union church. The missionaries of the Reformed (Dutch) Church of America, headed by Dr. Talmage, an admirable and delightful man, labour side by side and hand in hand with our missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church, and the native congregations are all under the supervision of one Presbytery—the "Presbytery of Amoy." The two missions have thus set a beautiful example of union. Surely the manifold and deplorable divisions which exist at home need not be reproduced on the foreign field!

The first evening Mr. Swanson took us to see the beautiful little church which has been erected under the supervision of the missionaries, and at the expense of Principal Douglas, of Glasgow, to the memory of his lamented brother, Dr. Douglas. It is a pretty white structure, with a red brick roof, very picturesquely situated, and standing in a large compound walled in on every side. The interior is especially neat and pretty, and also commodious. A curious feature is that down the centre aisle a low screen runs from below the pulpit to the door, completely dividing the church into two, one side being appropriated to the men, the other to the women. In most places in China this custom of the sexes being seated apart is still necessarily observed. We were delighted with the pretty church, it is appropriate in every way, and must add greatly to the comfort and convenience of the mission.

Next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Mr. Thompson took me out for a ramble, while my husband visited the theological class and gave the lads an address. You can imagine how delicious the climate must be at this season, when we could walk about all day clad in woollen clothes, finding the sun an agreeable companion, instead of the fierce and scorching tyrant he is in India. In the house a good

fire is quite a necessary of life in the winter months, and looks so bright and home-like.

We passed by the girls' school, and looked in for a moment to greet the pleasant-looking Chinese teacher and her pupils; then on, by clean pathways, white and gritty with sea-shell sand, through openings between the huge, curiously poised boulders, or winding over tiny fields of green stuff lying in the hollows, or terraced on the slopes—on to the quiet little missionary cemetery, where Sandeman and Douglas and other missionaries and their children rest in peace.

I need not tell you how profoundly touched I was by this visit. It is a lovely and most pathetic spot, lying in a little hollow amidst the rocks, surrounded by an enclosure, shady with beautiful trees and evergreens, and the grand mountains round about on every side. A sacred spot, consecrated by the dust of the eminent servants of Christ who sleep here—a true "God's acre," where they rest from their labours, and where in their death even more than by their consecrated life, they seem to take possession of China for Christ.

One Christian Chinese lies within the enclosure, in a tomb of horse-shoe shape, like those of some of his nation you see outside, and I could not but think it a fitting circumstance that a convert from among this people for whom they had given their lives should thus rest beside them till the resurrection morn. No doubt their voices are now mingling in the new song of Moses and the Lamb before God's throne.

The same afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Gordon and I crossed the harbour to Amoy, to visit the wife of one of the native pastors. I was anxious to see the home of a Chinese Christian family.

Chinese cities are indescribably dirty; but Amoy, I think, surpasses all we have seen in its amazing filth! We had not to penetrate very far, however, and soon reached the pastor's house. He himself was absent at a missionary conference at Swatow, but his wife, a sweet, gentle, refined-looking woman, with a tall, rather commanding presence, received us with much politeness and ceremony, though with great kindness. The room was large and airy, and beautifully clean, very simply furnished in the Chinese style, with a row of square, straight-backed carved chairs at the wall, and a small oblong tea-poy between every two. In addition to these there was a round table, and some book-shelves filled with books. On the small tea-poy tea was immediately served in tiny cups, with some excellent Chinese sweetmeats. Her mother soon came into the room—such a bright, happy Christian, full of life and vigour, and with a most intelligent face, though she is over seventy! Both she and her daughter have suffered much for the name of Christ. The conversation which followed was deeply interesting, kindly interpreted for my benefit by Mr. Gordon. How sorry I was that I could not comprehend the strange tongue in which they spoke! But I must not relate it, for my letter is already too long. The two ladies gave a most touching account of the death of the eldest daughter of the family, who had been married one single week, when her young husband died! Rapid consumption seized the grief-stricken girl, and in a few weeks she followed him to the grave. Her death-bed was a wonderful scene of mingled peace and triumph, through the grace of Christ, and it seemed to have left a deep impression on the family and the whole native church.

Before we left, they shewed us the church in which the pastor ministers, and the younger lady, with great pride, brought quite a crowd of fine boys to introduce to us. She has a large family, and her eldest living daughter is head teacher in Mrs. Talmage's girls' school.

One thing which made this visit memorable to me was, that an opportunity was afforded us of examining a *bound foot*. The Chinese ladies are exceedingly averse to letting the small foot be seen undressed, that is, without the lacings and tiny shoe in which this mummy-foot is encased. But the pastor's wife most kindly managed it for us. Though so long in the country, Mrs. Gordon had not seen one before, and I don't think either she or I would care to look at another! It is a more horrible and barbarous custom even than I knew; but I must not take time nor space now to describe the cruel process by which the natural foot, as God made it, is reduced to the dead, mis-shapen, useless mass we saw that day.

I am very sorry to say that binding the foot is as common and imperative a fashion as ever. It is not connected with religion, it is a purely social custom,

and girls are supposed not to be marriageable unless it is complied with. Even among the Christians it is hard to get it dispensed with, so an "Anti-Foot-Binding Society," like our temperance societies, has been established, the members of which bind themselves to abstain from the practice in their own families, and promote the cause generally of natural feet. The cruelty practised on young girls through this unreasonable and horrible custom is too terrible to think of.

Our visit to Amoy was thus filled with things of interest, but I am sorry I cannot wait to tell you half. The girls' schools, for example, interested us exceedingly. That connected with the English Presbyterian Mission occupies a small, good two-storied house, built through the efforts of the missionary ladies of the station, who collected the needful funds among their friends. It stands right below Mrs. Gordon's pretty bungalow, so that she can almost look in and see what is going on. I hope that it will soon need to be enlarged. The Chinese girls, with their sallow countenances, oblique eyes, wonderfully ornamented heads, and poor hobbling feet, are withal very intelligent. We were struck in both the English Presbyterian and American schools with the proficiency, specially in Scripture knowledge. We did our best to puzzle the pupils, Mrs. Talmage putting our questions in Chinese, but we did not succeed, they answered every question with great readiness and repeated long portions by heart. It was delightful too to hear them sing several well-known hymns, such as "Jesus loves me," in their own dialect. I have noticed that "Sankey's hymns" are in much favour among Chinese Christians, who sing them with force and heart, if not with much sweetness of voice.

Our charming visit came too soon to an end; on the third afternoon we bade adieu to our kind friends, and, accompanied by Mr. Swanson, set sail for Swatow. *January, 1881.*

THE DAY IS AT HAND.

The following beautiful passage is from a recent discourse on the words, "And there was no more sea," by Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, D.D., pastor of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, New York:

"And then, how strangely we are isolated and how painfully we are insulated from the dearest ones that have gone into the future before us. No word of tidings comes to us from across the sea. By night, we send up deep, strong thoughts into the spirit land, but we feel no answer, and our sigh dies away among the silence and the stars. Not one dear word has passed between us since away back in the months and the years the fluttering spirit breathed its last, long good-by, and looked its last love-look out of eyes that were clouding and closing. And the hand fell, and the pulse faltered; and it was done; and the spirit was fled, the spirit that was woven into ours as with meshes of steel. And now not one lisp out of the sky, not one whisper out of the night, to tell us and comfort us. Mystic orphanage of spirits that are filial! Mystic divorce of spirits that are wedded! And the years move on. We remember them and they remember us, we think. They worship there, and we worship here—a broken chorus rendering one psalm; they with eyes, from which all tears have been utterly wiped, and with faces beautiful with looking upon the front of God; we with eyes all tear-dimmed, stumbling over the roughness of life, wondering, hoping, and waiting—waiting till our exile shall be repealed, our little island of loneliness and expectation be made continuous with the continent of the redeemed, and no more sea in the new city of God."

If you intend to do a mean thing, wait till to-morrow. If you are to do a noble thing, do it now.

"LOVING KINDNESS," says the Talmud, "is greater than laws, and the charities of life are more than all ceremonies."

GOD often lays the sum of His amazing providence in very dismal afflictions, as the limner first puts on the dusk colours on which he intends to draw the portraiture of some illustrious beauty.—S. Charnock.

SPURGEON had preached one of his strongest sermons on the doctrine of election. He was already drawing the discourse to a close when, stretching his hand toward the gallery, he said, "Perhaps there is now some poor sinner away up there in the gallery who is saying, 'O I wish I knew whether I am one of the elect.' I can tell you," said Spurgeon, "if you are willing to be a Christian you are elected."