

we must seek lodgings elsewhere. The laborers at the salt-works offered no greeting when we went among them. Plainly some enemy had been busy during our absence. As we looked for new lodgings, we heard for the first time, from round a corner, the cry of "Foreign devils!"

This was the effect of the visit of some Buddhist priests, who had predicted terrible misfortunes if the earth were so deeply punctured by the drills of the foreigners. Moreover, that antipathy to foreigners which is deeply implanted in China was on the eve of a periodic outburst over the entire country. We were hearing the first mutterings of the popular wrath which culminated a few months later in the terrible "anti-missionary riots."

"I don't like this," Wright remarked to me. "There's trouble brewing. I wish we had Frost."

But Frost was at the bottom of the Hoang Ho. We felt his loss more than ever as we agreed that it would be wise to gather up our outfit for well-drilling, and return to the salt-works on the Min River.

On the way we visited Lee Wung, and found him well aware of the state of public feeling. Indeed, he was slightly cool toward us himself, but bade us proceed up the Min, and pump the water out of his five coal-mines there. He had the promise of a government coal contract, if he could contrive to fill it.

We went up the Min next day in the tug, with an order from Lee Wung to the Chinese foreman at the salt-works, who received us civilly: but we soon found that the priests had here, too, stirred up feeling against the "foreign devils."

As the engine of the salt-well had broken a crank-rod and been set aside, we repaired it, mounted it on wheels, and transported it to the coal-mines, where two days later we began pumping with seven men. The first whiff of steam seemed to arouse the animosity of the Chinese. That night the engine was maliciously disabled.

While we were repairing it next morning a crowd of loafers gathered, and three Taoist priests approached and harangued them. Wright and I watched the engine that night, and sent a messenger to Lee Wung. Next afternoon twelve soldiers from the garrison at the mouth of the Min appeared on the scene, and did guard duty at the mine for a week.

We cleared the smaller of the three flooded mines of water, and had begun pumping the second when hundreds of yellow circulars, printed in large black Chinese characters, were suddenly posted everywhere, on house doors, on trees, on rocks, even around the engine at the mine. I had our interpreter translate one of them into English, and here it follows, though certain gross expressions are expunged:

"All good men must rise and chase out the foreign devils and burn their books. They come to destroy China. They bore holes into Hades and let up fire. Their priests are all evil spirits that have escaped from Tartarus. They revile all that is holy in China."

"In every province these demon priests despatch renegades who secretly distribute evil books everywhere. Many of these books have been picked up. Remember, as soon as you hear them spoken about by any one, go quickly and make search everywhere and seize them. Whenever you see a devil son or a devil grandson praising the devil doctrines, attack him; whenever you see a devil book, burn it. On no account be careless."

Still Wright and I went about our business, working hard every day. In the course of a fortnight miners were fetching up coal from the small mine; but loafers, beggars and boys hooted us whenever we appeared in public.

At last the foreman warned us that he feared we were in personal danger, as dreadful anti-foreigner riots had occurred farther down the Yang-tsze, at Chung-king and Ichang.

That night we heard a great din of tom-toms, cymbals and shouting in the street outside the *hong*. I had not yet fallen asleep, but we had both retired. A mob of at least a thousand

Chinese had collected, carrying torches, and all were shouting, "Kill the foreign devils!"

Then our host ran in by a back way, and besought us to fly.

"At once! at once!" he said. "They will murder you! They will burn down the place!"

We stole out at a back door and ran for the river, where the tug lay moored, coaled and ready to fire up.

While Wright kindled the fire, I poled the craft out into midstream. As soon as steam could be made we decamped down the Min, and entered the main river Yang-tsze at three in the morning.

We decided to see Lee Wung and claim his protection, and so stopped at the landing-place for his house. Wright remained in the tug, while I ran four miles to the mansion. Our mandarin was in bed.

After a time he appeared, very sleepy, and resembling a little olive-colored wax idol more than anything I ever saw alive.

While I told my story, the little pessimist sat regarding me with apparent indifference, not to say disfavor. He broke silence at length by swearing in English. "I can do nothing," he said. "You will have to go."

"Go?" I asked. "Go where? We are in your service."

"Go where you like," he suddenly screamed. "Get out! That what you say in America: 'Skip out! Scoot!'"

"But, your excellency," I remonstrated, "be pleased to remember that we are sixteen hundred miles from the coast in the midst of your country, and that if you do not protect us, we shall very likely be murdered."

Lee Wung picked at his long nails, and then suddenly nipped one of them off with his teeth.

"I have lost money," he said. "I will do nothing more. You go! You have your pay. Get out!" he cried. "You understand that, do you not?"

"In that case," said I, "we shall keep possession of your tug, and do our best to get down the Yang-tsze in her. But take notice, we do not steal her."

"All right," he said, changing to sweetness suddenly. "You go in the launch. It is all right."

But he nipped off another nail so nervously, and his eyes dwelt on me in so unpleasant a manner that I half-suspected he meditated making away with me somehow.

The sun was just rising when I reached the landing-place where Wright was waiting on board the tug.

"The cold-blooded wretch!" he exclaimed, when I told him my experience. "But I expected as much. I never trusted him. And the sooner we are off the better. There's no telling what the little scamp may do."

Without delay we steamed away down the river. When one has started to run, it is best to run as fast as possible.

That forenoon we spoke to a market boat crossing the river, and purchased a quantity of rice, sweet potatoes, fruit and fowls, and at nightfall we moored the tug to a craggy bank where there were no houses. Here we prepared food and each obtained three hours' rest, one watching while the other slept.

On the third morning we reached Chung-king, where it was necessary to coal, and where river toll has to be paid. Wright and I carried each a certificate from Lee Wung, setting forth the fact that we were in his service; we had also a number of old orders bearing his signature. These we now displayed to the full extent of their value.

As the little mandarin was well known along the river the head

official, though he behaved sullenly, took the toll, accepted a fee, and permitted us to purchase five tons of coal. We also engaged a Chinese pilot for the gorges below, hired two river men to go as far as Ichang, and bought provisions for the journey.

Three days later after passing a Chinese gunboat just above the last gorge, we reached the great pool above Ichang without any startling incident. Here river toll had to be paid again and coal taken. The coal we got without difficulty, at four taels per ton, and did not discharge our two river men till it was on board.

Meantime we sent the pilot, who had already received his fees, with the money for the toll, to the customs boat which lay at the foot of the pool.

This pilot had agreed to go as far as Hwang-chau, a long distance below. We did not altogether trust him, as we were afraid he suspected us of being in unusually great haste. Two hours passed without the pilot's return. I now think that he decamped with the toll money, without troubling himself to go to the customs barge. But we did not suspect this at the time.

As a mob was assembling with cries of "Foreign devils!" we grew impatient to be off. Wright at last blew the whistle three times to summon our pilot back. Immediately the customs boat displayed a signal, ordering us to delay and communicate with them. Meantime the gunboat had dropped down the river to its usual position near the customs boat.

I now suppose that the customs officers signalled us as a reminder that we had forgotten to pay toll. But we guessed that our pilot had reported us as suspicious characters, and that the signal was the prelude to our arrest and imprisonment.

The chances of our getting out of China alive in the then excited state of public feeling seemed bad—particularly if Lee Wung should wickedly testify that we had stolen the tug!

"What do you think?" Wright said. "We've but a minute to decide this thing."

"Let us start," said I. "They've no telegraphs, thank fortune! We can steam faster than any messenger they can send down the river. Let's run for it, and take no risks of a Chinese prison!"

We cast off the shore lines, and seizing the pike-poles shoved the tug slowly off, so as to

