

so as to imitate curtains, and reveal the tablet. This is made of wood, about three feet high, and four inches wide, and bears this inscription in gilt on a blue ground: "The Emperor, the immortal, may he live forever!" This tablet is worshipped with incense in temples, and its presence here, with two candles before it, naturally excites surprise. Mr. Milne, the Scottish Missionary, visiting a mosque in Ningpo, charged the priest with idolatry on account of this tablet. Of course he stoutly denied the charge, as my friend here did. Be this as it may, it seems a politic concession to the other sects, and a method of placing themselves under Imperial sanction. I asked to see their Sacred Book, but the priest was not at home. A second opportunity, however, soon came.

Their Worship Day is our Friday, perhaps from a desire to avoid both the Jewish and the Christian days. On this day the faithful close their shops, and about noon repair to the mosques for worship. One day my neighbor, who had, on my invitation, previously attended our worship, came in and invited me to go and witness theirs. I was nothing loth, especially as I had been told that this privilege has been rarely accorded missionaries in China. At about twelve o'clock we arrived, but, as it was early, we were shown into the priest's guest-room, a spacious lofty apartment with good ventilation, infinitely superior to ordinary Chinese houses. The brick floor was uncommonly level. In the centre of the room opposite the door was the usual table, flanked by two chairs, found in guest-rooms. I was invited to sit in the left-hand chair which is the seat of honor in China. Behind us, on the wall, hung a large wooden board, on which in large gilt characters was "The Doctrine has a Great Origin," meaning, of course, the Mohammedan doctrine. For about an hour the faithful straggled in, at intervals, and either went off into a side room to chat and smoke, or seated themselves on stools and engaged in conversation with each other or with me. There were a few old men and a good percentage of young men. I recognized quite a number as those who had called on me, but the strangers plied me with questions regarding my honorable name, age, country, family etc. etc. Presently the priest came in. He is an intelligent looking man of forty, with a husky voice. He and his two colleagues had previously called on me. From time