

their usual ardor, and I learned that they thus ushered in the birthday of the goddess Kwan-yin. She is a great favorite with the Chinese, and on the island of Pootoo, occupies a more conspicuous place than Buddha himself. No temple is without her image, and she is the principal object of worship. Her birthday is celebrated with great rejoicing, and the priests find it so profitable, that they have contrived that it shall occur three times a year, or something which answers as an equivalent. The first occurs on the 19th of the second month, and is the true birth-day; the second is the anniversary of her leaving her mother's house, occurring on the 19th of the sixth month; and the third, on the 19th of the ninth month, is the anniversary of her ascending to heaven.

In the afternoon, visited a number of temples which I have not before seen. The priests were everywhere engaged in their devotion to the goddess whose birthday they were celebrating. As I pursued my way along solitary paths winding around the sides of the naked hills, the noise of chanting accompanied by the rapid stroke of the hollow wooden sounding-piece, reverberated through the valleys, and mingled with the roar of the waves breaking on the adjacent beach. There are many small temples, sometimes perched upon a rock, sometimes hidden by a clump of trees. In these I often found but a single worshipper, who however, went through the prescribed ceremonies with all due gravity and formality, and could not be induced to desist from his employment to enter into conversation, though one or two yielded so far as to extend a hand to receive a tract. The last temple to which I extended my walk this evening, contains the cave of Kwan-yin. It is a mere cavity under a rock, in the side of a hill on which the temple stands. The buildings are situated in an elevated position on the hill, which forms the shore, and a winding path, with the usual bamboo hedge on either side, leads down almost to the water's edge. My visit to this temple was one of peculiar interest, for it was the first temple which I entered, in my appointed field of labour.

The circumstances attending that visit, have impressed the remembrance of it very deeply upon my mind, and invested it with an interest which it would not otherwise possess. After a voyage from Hong Kong of unusual length, and so little peril, and having missed the proper passage to Chusan, we at length entered the channel between Pootoo and the opposite island, and cast anchor to wait for a favorable tide. Some of our company went on shore in one of the ship's boats, taking with us but two of the sailors to manage the oars, trusting to the passengers for the rest. This we had frequently done before, and it answered very well in a smooth sea. We found our way to the temple, and were entertained by the priests with tea and sweetmeats. While partaking of their hospitality, and endeavoring to converse with them, the heavens suddenly grew black, the wind lashed to a gale, and a thick fog obscured the atmosphere. Night, too, was just setting in, and before we could reach the boat, our ship was entirely hidden from view. The waves ran high, the tide ran swiftly through the channel, and the ship was half a mile distant. We pushed off from the shore, expecting to be swept so far from the right direction that we should not be able to find our vessel. We were more than once in great jeopardy, and had one of our oars broken, but a kind Providence preserved us, and brought us to the ship in safety.

**Conversion with Priests.—Preaching.—Whole Number of Priests.—Fear of Pirates.—Return to Ningpo.**

August 1st. Sabbath. Spent part of the morning in conversing with several priests. They were quite disposed to defend the practice of idolatry, but laid most stress on the argument that after all there was very little difference between my doctrine and theirs. They worshipped Buddha, and

so did I, but under a different name. They worshipped God, and called him Buddha; I too worshipped God, but called him Jesus. From this position they were deterred not to be driven, by any assertion or argument to the contrary. I have several times also had conversations with a respectable old man from Chinlee, who is spending several weeks here to give himself to worship. He hopes to secure the blessing of the gods now and hereafter by his piety, and is joined to his idols.

In the afternoon, endeavored to obtain an audience for preaching, and succeeded in collecting some fifteen or twenty of the priests, and others, who listened with respectful attention. One of the priests came in while I was speaking, bringing a platter of beans, and while listening to the discourse, very coolly occupied himself in eating them for dinner. Afterwards I visited the *thou-sie*, and in its neighborhood addressed three or four different audiences.

August 21. Hitherto I have uniformly found the priests willing to listen with respect, if not with much interest, to what I have said on the doctrines of religion. At a temple which I visited this evening, however, several of the priests were very much annoyed by the assertion that there is but one God, and stoutly denied that there was any ground for such a belief. They endeavored to refute it, not by any formal or metaphysical argument, but by highly extolling the powers of the gods they worshipped.

I have remarked, in visiting the temples, that a good deal of pains has been taken to ornament the grounds in the vicinity. The approach to most of the temples is through a neat path or avenue, hedged in by a thick growth of bamboo twigs, and sometimes shaded by trees.

Various and conflicting statements have been made in reference to the whole number of priests on the island. I made many inquiries, but found no one who seemed to know any thing definite on the subject. If the priests possess the means of ascertaining the exact number, I suspect none of them have had sufficient curiosity to take the trouble of a careful inquiry. In fact, although there is a certain number attached to each temple, the number actually present is constantly varying. A large proportion are always absent and are scattered through all the provinces of the empire, making pilgrimages, or soliciting money for the support of the establishment. On the other hand, this is a place of great resort for the whole Buddhist brotherhood, and at certain seasons of the year, they collect in great numbers. The most distant parts of the empire have their representatives, and they sometimes remain several months. The number may thus be sometimes raised much above the usual average, while at other times it may fall as much below it. A missionary who has spent some weeks here, informs me that during his stay, he has perceived a diminution in the number of persons present.

The priests of each temple constitute a distinct family, with the abbot at its head, and each manages its domestic arrangements in its own way. When a priest is attached to a temple, he is considered a fixture, and has a room assigned him; sometimes a whole room to himself, and sometimes sharing it with two or three others. They are also allowed to have private property, which is rigidly respected; and a few have separate establishments, living entirely in their own rooms, and cooking their own food. We were refused admittance to some of the rooms which we wished to see because they belonged to absent priests.

31. There is one circumstance that detracted considerably from the pleasure of our visits to this far famed seat of Buddhism. We cannot but indulge sometimes a feeling of insecurity on account of the number of pirates, who are known to be constantly traversing the waters in this vicinity. We have not much reason, perhaps, to apprehend danger from these men, as we have but little to tempt their cupidity; and it would not be good

policy in them to attract the notice of foreigners; yet when we see piratical junks lying at anchor near us, it causes some feeling of uneasiness. There is a large junk of this description lying a short distance from the island this evening. This has recently occurred several times, and the pirates themselves have landed, in small numbers, for the purpose of paying their devotions at the temples. They seem to be very *pius* robbers, and the priests assure us, there is not the least danger to be apprehended from them, for they will not dare to harm anything on this sacred ground. They have already learned by experience, that any depredations committed here, will be followed by immediate manifestations of the divine wrath. A party of pirates once returned to plunder some of the temples, but they had no sooner returned to their vessel, than a terrible storm arose, and it was with difficulty they escaped with their lives. Since that time, no similar attempt has been made. These assurances, however, are not very satisfactory to us, and we have determined to leave as soon as we can procure a boat. It is possible that it will prove not more safe to trust to the forbearance of the pirates, than to that of the serpents on the island. These, the priests tell us, are perfectly harmless in consequence of an agreement, or treaty, which has been formed with the snake king, or god of the snakes. By this arrangement it is understood, on the one hand, that the snakes are not to injure men, and on the other, that the men are to be permitted to live undisturbed in their retreats, and on no account to be injured. This fable may, indeed, in one sense, be a fact, for there is doubtless a covenant with "that old serpent, the devil," who leads them captive at his will.

9th. Having procured a small boat, we left Pootoo yesterday afternoon. On going on board we found that a portion of our already too-contracted quarters had been appropriated by a priest, although we had engaged the whole boat for ourselves. We had no room to spare, and the poor fellow was not in a situation to be very agreeable company, being quite intoxicated. He was very anxious to go, and implored permission, by all the gods he worshipped, to remain with us. While endeavoring to get rid of his obstinate importunities, one of the priests came up, and asked to be paid for the use of the rooms we had occupied. I had already left in the hands of one of the fraternity what I deemed an ample compensation, and told him I could give no more. He said he had not received it, and ran back to the temple to search for the priest to whom I had given it. He soon returned, saying that the sum was not sufficient, but in asking how much it was, I found he had received just one half the amount I had paid. He again returned, and soon came back to inform me that the culprit had been obliged to disgorge the remainder, with which he was satisfied.

While getting under sail a large junk passed near us, which our hostmen told us was a pirate. After running in some distance, it came to anchor, but did not attempt to molest us.

We reached Ningpo this evening without any accident.

\* Subsequent events have shown how much we were mistaken, and we cannot be too thankful to Him who preserved us from the real danger to which we were exposed.

David Hume, after witnessing in the family of the venerable La Roche those consolations which the gospel only can impart, confessed, with a sigh, that "there were moments when, amidst all the pleasures of philosophical discovery, and the pride of literary fame, he wished that he had never doubted."

Lord Byron, who had a constant struggle against his better nature and nobler convictions, mournfully acknowledged "the Christian enjoys an advantage over the infidel in having an emboldened hope through life."