

A FORMOSA STORY.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:—Here is a story I heard from the lips of our own missionary, Rev. Dr. Mackay.

In the early days of the Formosa Mission the missionary and his little band of students spent a great part of their time travelling from village to village seeking to win the people to Jesus Christ.

They would travel along the west coast down to the south and back again to Tamsui, the missionary headquarters. Then off they would start again, around the north end, along the north-east coast, and then back to their starting point. It was all foot travel, and often bare foot at that.

The villages along the north and north-east coast particularly, hated and despised the "foreign devil" and his followers, especially this northernmost village of H— (I cannot pronounce its name, let alone spell it so we shall just call it H—).

One day, on one of these preaching tours, the missionary band came upon this village on what happened to be a great idol feast. Between two and three hundred pigs had been killed, and were all laid out in tempting array before the eyes of the hungry gods, each pig with a ripe orange in its open mouth, and a knife still stuck in its upturned throat.

The crowd was gathering fast, farmers and their families coming in from the surrounding country, but in all the bustling throng there seemed to be no ear for the message of love and peace proclaimed in turn by the missionary group. Words of hatred and looks of scorn were all the thanks they got. No, not quite all. One man in the crowd seems to have intended something more.

The missionary began to notice this man very busy going from group to group talking eagerly, looking occasionally at their corner, and acting quite as if he was trying to set something on foot. From the first, Dr. Mackay was conscious that his little company was the object of interest, but it was not long before he felt that the eyes of this mischief-maker were especially upon himself.

Then he saw the leader snatch a knife out

of the throat of a pig, and start straight out towards him. The crowd came too, cheering him on. The boys ran excitedly ahead of the rest. The missionary faced the man; the man bore straight down upon the missionary, the knife in his hand just ready for one quick plunge.

They met. The man with the knife paused when they were a pace apart. Their eyes met and his went down. The hand with the knife fell. He turned and slunk back into the crowd, moved off and put the knife into the throat of the pig from which he had taken it. The crowd did not cheer this time, and the boys were no longer conspicuous.

Then the missionary and his brave young men, with an empty table for their pulpit, took turns in preaching "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," the good news of "God so loved the world," but it did seem very much like casting the precious "pearls before swine"—not the dead but the living ones, whose very heart was to "trample them under their feet" and turn again and "rend the preachers limb from limb" if they only dared.

When the missionary band got back to Tamsui, the first thing they did was to go together into the little chapel and hold a prayer meeting. What do you suppose they were praying for? Anything special? Yes. They were praying for that village of H—, that God would touch their hearts of stone, and make a place for His salvation even among these scorners.

The next Sabbath there were three strangers in the little church. They waited after the service, and the missionary came down and talked to them. They were three men from the village of H—, and they had come to hear more about the Lord Jesus Christ. The next Sabbath there were fifteen, and they again waited for a little earnest talk after the service. Week after week it was the same. Sometimes as many as twenty walked over Sabbath morning from that place.

At last they said, "Missionary, come over to our village and preach to us, and we will build you a chapel." Missionary and students