

SHALL NEVER DIE.

"Shall never die." Wonderful words to be spoken beside the grave at which weeping friends are gathered. And the family bond has been broken, and that from which the spirit has fled is given back to the earth that it may return to its kindred dust. But he who speaks is the Lord of life and death; his own heart is pierced with the sorrow, and he weeps with those who mourn, but in his infinite love he draws aside the veil and reveals the great mystery of life, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." We are living in the lower sphere; we are bounded by the limitations which belong to the true nature of both life and death. Life is not limited and bounded by death; it belongs to the eternal years. Death is not the master of man, commanding him back into the grave and into the darkness and silence of the unseen, into which hope peers with dim and clouded eyes. The Lord of life stands by the grave and declares that in him there is immortality. He is the life and whosoever believes in Him receives from Him of His own immortal nature. Over this death has no power. It cannot dissolve the relation of the soul to Christ. Its mission is simply to remove the limitations on life, to crumble into dust all which for a time served as a dwelling place for the spirit, and give it freedom to enter into the fullness of life with God. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die;" and he who spoke the words, to seal their truth, called back the spirit to its earthly tenement for a little longer that joy might fill the home and give faith the victory, and later himself went under the power of death and then burst the bonds of the grave, giving to the believer the sure pledge that he shall never die.—United Presbyterian.

"UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN."

There is a law of our being which requires much from those who have received much. When a husbandman plants a vineyard and spends much time, much money, much thought and care on it, he expects to receive much from it, and is grievously disappointed if his vineyard fails to bring forth much fruit. When a father expends much money, much care, much love and much time on his son, sending him to the best schools, buying for him the best books, affording him opportunity to travel extensively through the world, he expects much from him, and is grievously disappointed if his son proves to be ungrateful, unappreciative and worthless. The father hoped he would be a great man, a wise man, a useful man in the world, and he is nothing but a prodigious and humiliating failure. We pity such a father from the depth of our heart.

Our heavenly Father has bestowed much on us. Besides all other good gifts He has given unto us His Son and His holy Gospel. He expects much from us, and if His vineyard does not yield much fruit He will be grieved as a father is grieved. He has done great things for us and is looking for great things in return. Great gratitude, great character, great strength, great usefulness, are due from us. We have been placed in situations where these are possible by the grace of God. If we should fail to make suitable returns for all that has been given we shall never know the blessedness which has been provided for us. It is only by making the best use of the advantages we have received that true blessedness may be found. Many are miserable, not because they have not received enough to make them happy, but because they will not use it. They are rich, but will not do good with their money. They are intelligent, but will not use their talent for the glory of God and the good of humanity. They have education, but seek to make mercenary use of their knowledge. They say, "We have something the world needs, and we will make men pay for it." [Unhappy wretches! Jesus gave all, He gave Himself to the unworthy.—N. Y. Christian Advocate.

MY NATIVE LAND—FORMOSA.*

By George M. MacKay, B.A.

On the southeast coast of China, about eighty miles from the mainland, lies the island of Formosa. This rugged isle, for whose possession many nations have fought and bled, is scarcely half the size of Scotland. Its total length is about 250 miles and its breadth 70.

For convenience sake Formosa may be divided into two sections, the east and the west coast. On the east, the island is rugged, wild and mountainous. Vast, dense forests of tropical trees, intertwined with numberless varieties of climbing plants, cover the entire country. It is in this range of mountains that the largest camphor forest in the world is found. In fact, eight-tenths of the camphor used in the world comes from this forest.

As yet, few civilized men make their home in this part of the island. The land is entirely in the possession of the savages, fierce, inveterate head hunters of the Malay tribe. For the last 200 years these sons of the forests have been waging war against their invaders, the Chinese. And though pushed farther and farther back into their mountain retreats, these warlike Malays still hold sway over half the island. Repeated attempts have been made by the Japanese during these last ten years to subdue them, but with little or no success. At present, the Japanese government has a force of about 5,000 men stationed along the frontier to push them back. But, so far, little has been accomplished. Fighting under cover and in their native haunts, an armed force has a very small chance against these expert warriors. The story of the Formosan frontier life is a story of bloodshed. Every year hundreds of peaceful Chinese peasants and scores of Japanese fall victims to these tribes. The task of subduing them is a great one. It will take many years before the Japanese will be able to accomplish such a task.

Turning our attention now to the west coast, we find that the conditions are quite the reverse. Instead of lofty mountains, we find a level plain, and instead of the savages, 3,000,000 peaceful Chinese settlers. It is here that tea, rice, sugar cane, oranges, pine apples and other tropical plants are grown. The soil in Formosa is extremely fertile. No barren spots exist anywhere. The whole island, covered with luxuriant vegetation, is green all the year round.

Of the 3,000,000 Chinese who inhabit this section of the island, fully two-thirds are engaged in agriculture. They first came over from the mainland about 250 years ago, bringing with them their strange religions and customs. Among these superstitious people the English Presbyterian Church established its mission in the south in 1865, and seven years later, in 1872, my father began his work in the north.

In those days he met with a great deal of opposition on the part of the native populace and the local Chinese officials. Obstacles of all sorts were placed in his way. Many of the churches were torn down, and he often had narrow escapes from the murderous intentions of the infuriated mobs. I remember a time when no missionary or foreigner could go through the streets of a Chinese city without being followed by a mob whose delight was to make uncomplimentary remarks about the strangers. Sometimes they behaved goodnaturedly, at other times they were quite hostile.

But, being a man of action and of iron will, these obstructions born of prejudice, did not in the least daunt my father. To him Christianity was a vital, ever-living and aggressive force. To capture the island for Christ, heaven strongholds must be taken. It is thus that we find him planting the numerous churches throughout the hostile cities and towns of North Formosa.

Gradually the Formosans came to recognize the fact that Christianity is

a mighty force for good wherever it is found, and though still holding to their old belief, the attitude of the Formosans to-day is friendly towards Christianity. Missionaries are treated with due courtesy and respect wherever they go. A missionary's visit to-day is welcome in almost every home.

In carrying out his aggressive policy, my father extended his work eastwards among the civilized savages, called Pepo-han. These simple people make their living chiefly by tilling their little farms and fishing. They live in little thatched cottages grouped together to form a hamlet. In the larger villages our mission has had churches built, numbering in all about thirty-six.

A few years ago, while visiting a number of these outskirting stations, I was somewhat surprised to find such a large number of these "savages of the plain," who call themselves Mackays, after my father. At a village, the preacher in charge informed me that two-thirds of the inhabitants were Mackays and that the number was steadily increasing. Mission work among these Mackays has been marked with considerable success. They are very impressionable, though they lack that element of steadfastness so commonly found in the Chinese. Hence, though they are more easily appealed to than the Chinese, it requires also more care to keep them in the fold.

The work among the Chinese is becoming more and more important each year. With over 1,000,000 Chinese in our field, our church in Formosa has an important mission to fulfil. To uplift this race and win the island for Christ is worthy of our best and united efforts.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

- M.—A beautiful situation, Ps. 48.
T.—Making glad the Isles, Ps. 97.
W.—A harvest of tears, Ps. 136.
Th.—A great change, Isaiah 35.
F.—Sailing for Cyprus, Acts 13:1-12.
Sa.—A self-sacrificing missionary, 2 Cor. 11:23-25.
Sun. Topic.—My Native Land—Formosa. Ex. 3:1-14.

THE SUPERNATURAL.

The battle of unbelief is the same to-day that it has ever been. It fights against the supernatural in religion. Christianity's great Author was the most popular of teachers, so long as he was only a Teacher and Healer and human Friend. But when his earthly career approached its crisis and he was compelled to reveal himself unmistakably as God manifest in the flesh, the multitudes forsook him, and he went to ignominious death almost unbefriended. His chief and real offence was that "being a man, he made himself God." That is the "offence of the cross which is to the world foolishness" was that "being a man, he made preme vindication. If Jesus Christ were not a supernatural being Christianity is not supernatural. But if Christ were more than human he must have been divine, and Christianity is a divine revelation. If it be divine, it should surprise nobody if it appears to have supernatural features. Would it not be surprising if it had not? If it had no uniqueness, no mystery, no revelations of unheard-of truth, would it not seem that it were probably the device of men? Why, therefore, do people balk at miracles and other supernatural things in this supernatural gospel, especially so when they must observe that the most conspicuous figure in all human history is Jesus Christ, who can scarcely be accounted for on natural grounds? He is the world miracle. Christianity stakes its whole claim on the integrity and divinity of him. Believe him, and everything the Bible says is believable, reject him, and it were futile to believe anything.—Home Herald.

"I say, my man, have you seen a golf ball?"

"No, mum. But I've got one in my pocket as I brought from 'ome as I can sell yer!"

*Y. P. Topic for January 30, 1910.—My Native Land—Formosa; Exodus 3:1-14.