

BOUND FEET IN CHINA.

ABOUT the first thing that a young Chinese lady remembers is the painful ordeal of binding her feet. This usually takes place when she is from four to five years of age. She must submit to this torture if she ever expects to be a lady. In the poorer families of Canton it is usual to bind the feet of the eldest daughter, who is intended to be brought up as a lady. Her large-footed sisters will grow up to be bond-servants or domestic-slaves, and, when old enough, the concubines of rich men or the wives of laboring men. Small feet are therefore, the mark of gentility, that distinguishes them from the servant class. What we look upon as a frightful deformity, the Chinese regard as a mark of beauty, and these crippled little feet are called "the golden lilies."

The process of foot-binding is a simple one. The girl is, we suppose, five years old, and her mother takes a strip of black calico, which she wraps tightly around the child's foot, beginning at the big toe and ending at the ankle. The object is to prevent the foot from spreading out, to cause it to taper to a point and develop an abnormally high heel. The bandage is wrapped so tightly that the smaller toes are turned in towards the sole of the foot, and a large hollow is formed between the sole and the heel. The little one screams with agony, but her cries are unheeded. The cramped foot is then put into a small shoe, a smaller one being required as the foot gets smaller. The growth of the foot is retarded, the bones contract, the flesh shrivels up, and then the bandage is tightened.

Ordinarily the pain passes into a dull numbness, and then to a condition where there is little or no feeling. There have been frequent cases where the circulation is entirely stopped. Diseased bone and mortification then ensue, and amputation is necessary to save the child's life. I have seen several of these amputated feet preserved in Canton hospitals, the sight of which made me shudder. With care, the girls suffer no more than to be cripples for life; and when the foot is sufficiently cramped, it is put into a tiny shoe from three to three and a half inches long with a high heel strong enough to support the entire weight of the body, as Chinese ladies do their walking on their heels. If they go outside the house they are always accompanied by a stout old woman whose business it is to carry her on her back, or to run behind her sedan chair, and on all occasions "to play propriety" for her.

Passing one day along the streets of Fatsam, I heard screams from a house close to me. The door was open, and I saw a group of women bend over a little girl whose feet were being bound. I stepped in and remon-

strated with the father, who was sitting by, as it seemed, unconcernedly. He replied, with his blandest smiles: "Yes, sir, it is a cruel practice as you say; customs differ the world over. In our country we bind girls' feet, but I notice in Hong Kong your Western ladies bind their waists."

The origin of the custom is very obscure. Some affirm that a club footed empress of the Sung dynasty insisted on the ladies of her court binding their feet and forming them as near as possible after the model of her own clumsy extremities. Be that as it may, the custom to day follows the law of demand and supply. Young men seek for the smallest footed wives, and Chinese maidens or their mothers manipulate their feet accordingly.

The custom is purely Chinese, the Manchu dynasty—that is the present reigning dynasty—has never adopted it, in fact, detest the practice as much as we do. The fifteen year old maiden that has just become the empress of China, and all the imperial concubines, have large feet. It must, therefore, afford some consolation to the poor large footed China girl upon whom no gay Lothario would even cast so much as a glance, that his majesty of the dragon throne sees beauty in a solid natural sized foot, and that she possesses at least one qualification for admittance to the imperial harem which her proud hobbling sister has lost forever. It is needless to say that missionaries everywhere discourage this barbaric practice, and that it is discountenanced by the natives themselves when brought under Christian instructions.—*Our Mission.*

THE REMEDY.

AGENTLEMAN, while gathering cucumbers in his garden, near Oil City, Pennsylvania, was bitten on the end of the finger by a copperhead, one of the most poisonous of all American serpents. He killed the snake, then with his penknife promptly cut off the finger at the second joint, had the wound dressed, and is reported as doing well. This was heroic treatment, but it was doubtless the best that could be employed.

If we could get rid of the poison of the Old Serpent by cutting off a finger, or even by plucking out an eye, we would doubtless be willing to submit to the painful operation to escape endless death. But since the blood of Christ is a complete remedy for the poison of sin, and its benefits can be obtained by "looking unto Jesus," how wonderful is man's moral perversity that he will not "look and live!"—*United Presbyterian.*