

nip off a finger or a toe—he teased the pug dog while mother cooked the millet porridge till father came in, his sheepskin coat frozen stiff, and icicles hanging from his nose and moustache. Then they had supper, and went all to bed directly it was dark. There were no lamps in the streets and, besides, an odd wolf might be lying in wait to carry off a toothsome small boy.

It was not the first time Sweet Plum had seen the foreign devil. He could just remember the bad time, two years before, when all day long he had heard a dreadful 'boom, boom,' away in the hills, how at dusk streams of tired, angry-looking big men came pouring down the road, all muddy, and many with bandages round heads and arms, and how next morning, very early, the village was full of small brown men with guns who came into every house and knew where to find the things that were good to eat. Those were bad times. Little Plum was lean and hungry then. The millet was trampled and spoiled, and father could plant no more, for all the mules and cattle had been taken to pull guns and drag carts for the armies, but that was



long ago, and now Sweet Plum ran gaily down the street calling out 'Foreign devil!' and then 'Big nose'—that was very rude—till man and horse were out of sight.

There was really quite a lot to see, even in that small Three House Village—marriages and funerals, and processions to the graves to worship the spirits. And there were feasts, when mother made delightful dumplings, full of lovely pig's flesh, which Sweet Plum gobbled with his chopsticks till he really could not bend.

Soon the harvest arrived, and the big carts came home heaped high with millet till the fields were bare and brown, and even the stubble was rooted up to make winter fires. Then the squawking wild geese began to fly south, and presently the hard frost came, and Sweet Plum tied himself up in five or six coats till he was as broad as he was long, and pulled his felt cap down over his ears, and went out to see the strings of carts coming down from the north. Such a lot of carts—for the ruts were frozen hard and smooth—each with a team of five or six mules, all pulling hard, and sometimes a small donkey or two harnessed in to help, their drivers walking alongside in skin shoes and shaggy fur caps, cracking their long whips. It was such fun to steal a ride as far as the Fox Temple at the corner of the village.

Poor little Plum! One day as he was hanging on to the tailboard of a cart, somehow he slipped and fell off. Before he could scramble up, the mules of the next cart following close behind were right on top of him. He screamed, 'ma ya,' and then—the next thing he knew he was lying in the house; his mother was crying, and the room was full of neighbors, all talking at once, and each advising something different. At last they put a big plaster on Sweet Plum's broken leg, and tied it up with millet stalks, and

went home. But his mother kept on crying, only stopping now and then to scold poor unhappy Sweet Plum.

That happened in the coldest weeks. At New Year Feast Sweet Plum could not put on his best clothes, nor take his share of dumplings. Spring came, and still a poor thin white Sweet Plum lay on the brick bed, moaning with the bad pain in his leg. They tried all kind of medicines. One Chinese doctor—he was not really a doctor!—in very big spectacles came and ran a long needle into the swelling 'to let out the wind,' he said; but Sweet Plum only cried the more. Another day Mr. Plum took the cart and a big present, and next night came back with a very famous doctor indeed, whose finger nails were longer and blacker than any you have ever seen. This big man looked at the leg, and said he could drive away this 'wind.' So he put out the light and began to dance and stamp in the dark room, waving a bundle of burning sticks about his head, shouting and calling on the evil spirits to come help him cure little Plum's leg. But when in the smoke Sweet Plum saw his fierce, red face coming nearer, and the burning sticks almost touch his leg, he shrieked in terror; and even Mr. Plum was white. So that 'devil doctor' too went away; but Sweet Plum grew no better.

At last Mr. Plum said to his wife: 'There is nothing left but the foreign doctor.' 'No, no,' she cried, 'he will cut off his leg.' 'I won't go,' sobbed little Plum. But the father would not listen: he had seen a man who had been cured at the foreign hospital. So he got a blanket slung on two poles, and he wrapped up Sweet Plum and put him inside. Then Mr. Plum and his friends picked up the poles on to their shoulders, and started away for the Mission hospital, Mrs. Plum following in the cart with Little Beauty, who could not be left alone at home. Two days later they all stood before the foreign doctor. 'He does not look so fierce,' said Mrs. Plum. But the doctor only asked gravely 'Why did you not come sooner?' Then Sweet Plum looked up: it was the same foreign devil he had seen riding through Three House Village! So the poor frightened little boy cried out, 'Oh, don't cut off my leg.'

Soon after Sweet Plum found himself in a strange iron bed in a big clean room, where there was so much to see that he almost forgot the pain in his leg. But Mrs. Plum, sitting cross-legged on the cold, foreign bedstead, as she smoked her long pipe, grumbled—'This is a strange place, indeed! They won't even let a body spit on the floor.' Poor Mrs. Plum!

There came a day when they took little Plum down a corridor to another room. When the doctor, in a long white coat, with a smile told him not to be frightened. But he was!—there was such a funny, chokey smell.

Sweet Plum woke up in bed again: his leg felt so nice and comfy in clean bandages, and his father and mother were smiling at him. From that day Sweet Plum began to mend. He got fat again—no pain now. The days went quickly: there was so much to see and hear. Soon he learned to sit up and smile when the doctor came round: and he was not at all frightened of the dressings.

Then a foreign lady used to come, and when he had stopped wondering at her funny clothes, he listened to the wonderful stories she told of a foreign Man, who took little children in His arms. It was very nice, though difficult to understand, of course; but Mrs. Plum was more and more interested, and began to ask questions about the 'foreign doctrine,' as she called it. Sometimes his father was there too and listened, and bought a little book to read more about this 'Jesus religion,' which must be good, since it made people so kind.

At last came the day when a fat, rosy Sweet Plum sat in the cart, ready to start for home, bidding farewell to all his hospital friends, while Mr. Plum went to knock his head on the floor before the doctor, to show his gratitude.

There is a little Christian Church in Three House Village now. A dozen people meet to sing and read in the Plums' house, and Mr. Plum tells what he heard at the hospital. They don't know much, those Chinese Chris-

tians, but when they come to a difficult place, there's always Sweet Plum to say 'Jesus! Yes, He cured my leg.'

That was a year ago, and one day Sweet Plum saw again the foreigner and his horse. But how different his greeting now! 'Mother, mother,' he shouts, rushing into the house, 'mother quick, here's the foreign doctor!' And out comes Mrs. Plum as fast as her little feet can carry her, full of eagerness, crying, 'away, Sweet Plum, and fetch your father. Please come in doctor, come in, and drink some tea, and tell us more about the doctrine.'

Some Boys' Mistakes.

It is a mistake for a boy to think a dashing, swaggering manner will commend him to others. The fact is that the quiet, modest boy is much more in demand than the boy of the swaggering type. Modesty is as admirable a trait in a man as in a woman, and the wise boy will find it to his distinct advantage to be quiet and modest in manner.

It is a mistake for a boy to put too high an estimate on his own wisdom. He will find



it to be to his advantage to rely on the far greater wisdom of those much older than himself. And he will find it still more to his advantage to rely on God's Word for direction in all the affairs of life.

It is a mistake for a boy to feel at any time in all of the days of his boyhood that it is not his duty to be respectful and deferential to his father and mother. The noblest men in the world have felt this to be their duty.

It is a mistake for a boy to feel that there is any better way of acquiring a dollar than by honestly earning it. The real 'royal road to fortune' is by the road that requires honest toil and the giving of the very best one has to give in return for money received.

It is a mistake for a boy to feel that religion is something intended for women and girls, and that it is unmanly for him to go to church and Sunday school. The world has never known better or manlier men than those who have been faithful attendants at both church and Sunday school. Real piety is the foundation of all character, and the scoffer at religion is never respected by those whose respect it is worth while to have.

It is a mistake for a boy to do anything 'on the sly.' The sly boy is sure to be found out, and when he has once lost the confidence of his friends it is extremely difficult for him to regain it. The wise boy will be 'as honest as the day.' Woe to him if he is not!—'American Boy.'

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