

opening itself to Western ways. We note the following from Dr. Porter at Shantung, on the Yellow River, dated last September: "I met a little steam-tug, which had towed two barges with telegraph wires for the submarine cable for crossing the Yellow River. This was the first steamboat on the Grand Canal. It went without difficulty on the summer's high water to Szeching-cho, the point where the canal really begins. I learn to-day that the southern half of the telegraph line is completed. The northern half still waits completion. There are only four stations between Shanghai and Tientsin. A proclamation says it is for official use only. The people cannot use it until they get familiar with it. At Te-cho there is no station, and we shall not be able to use the line for some years I suppose, although it is so near us." As the Zulu chief desires the secret of "powder" from the missionary, and invites the Gospel with a side glance to the benefits brought, we are not hastily to conclude that steam and telegraph are signs that China is won. The following will make manifest how much has yet to be overcome from the prejudices of the people, at which we need feel no surprise if we only remember the strength and folly of our own: "It has come our turn at last after long prosperity to feel a touch of official interference in our work, and of official persecution. You recall the widow Wu at Ti-chi, and her gift of house and land for a chapel. On my arrival in September I learned that the Te-cho mandarin was annoyed at learning that we were building. He inquired of all his constables where land had been sold to foreigners. He then arrested the Ti-chi constable for not reporting the case of Mrs. Wu. To ward off difficulty I went to the city, called upon the mandarin, was politely received, and was promised that if the woman gave the house willingly he would stamp the deeds. I left a native writer, Teacher Lu, to wait for the deeds. The officials wanted a copy of the deed to keep on file, which of course seemed a proper thing. I was somewhat annoyed to find the next week that the official had hoodwinked the helper, or perhaps forced him to rewrite the deed, expunging all the important sentences, and changing entirely the character of the gift. Thus, the words: 'Believe in the doctrine of Jesus,' was changed to 'Believer in doctrine.' Again, 'Gives for preaching chapel and church school-room,' was changed to read, 'gives for a government free school.' This changed document he consented to put on file, but at last failed to stamp it. In the meantime he had stirred up the gentry to refuse to make any sale of goods to us, and we had to give up some bargains we had made, the persons being scared out of them. Then the mandarin issued an order, a copy of which I have, demanding that all Christians be registered to ascer-

tain if they were hypocrites or not. A cunning that all who entered the church were men of character, he insisted that if they did not register they were presumptively bad. He ordered that all constables, village elders, and neighbours should spy out and report the names and numbers of Christians, and threatened severe punishment if any secretly refused to register. The consternation of all the villages in the Te-cho district was great. Church members flocked to me to report and ask advice. To add to our dismay, an expelled church member at Ti-chi, a woman of ill repute, out of anger and jealousy, because of a family brawl, threw a lot of gunpowder into the chapel, or rather house, the gift to the church, which blew down a partition, and set the house on fire. It was saved from destruction by the neighbours. Two days later the old mandarin heard of it, and thinking it a chance to implicate the native Christians, arrested the constable again, and had him horribly beaten, ostensibly for not reporting the fire, really with hope of injuring the church." Dr. Porter has already made such representations in this case both to Chinese and American officials, that he hopes redress will be obtained, and that no barrier will long be put in the way of any who wish to seek Christian instruction.

THE following is an imperial decree from China, dated July last:—"For several days past a comet has been visible in the Northwest, which we reverently take to be a warning indication from heaven, and accept with feelings of the deepest and most respectful awe. At the present time there are difficulties of many kinds to contend against, and the people are not at ease. It only remains for ourselves and our ministers mutually to aid each other in the maintenance of an attitude of reverential watchfulness, cultivating a spirit of virtue, and examining our shortcomings in the hope of invoking blessings and harmonious influences from heaven, and securing comfort to the black-haired race. Do all ye ministers at our court, then, each and all strive to be diligent in the exercise of your respective functions, and with all your might put away from you the habits of pertinaciousness so long indulged in, assisting us with true sincerity of heart, and uniting in a common effort to rescue your country from her difficulties." The decree still further urges reformation, that "heaven" may prove propitious. The Chinese idea seems to be not so much to appeal to a personal god for protection as to escape the influences which destroy the "good luck."

THE following note, also from the *Herald*, has its own interest:—"A CHRISTIAN RAJAH.—Rev. David Young is reporting a series of communications to the *Missionary Record* of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, a visit he has made to India. Among