

McClure left us some two or three weeks ago for Ch'u-Wang. Mrs. McClure writes that she has numbers of women coming to see her every day, no doubt out of curiosity to see a foreign lady ; however, we hope the day is not far distant when something more than mere curiosity will bring them. Pray that "the light of the Sun of righteousness may shine on these our heathen sisters who are now sitting in the darkness and shadow of death," for nothing but the Gospel can dispel the dense darkness, ignorance and superstition in which they have lived for ages.

Here is an instance of their superstitious credulity, which occurred last week. On the 30th day of the third month of each year a goddess called "Nina," it is believed, leaves her abode on T'ai-shan, a holy mountain in this province, and in some mysterious way—some say in the clouds—comes to Lin Ch'ing. Her image is taken from a Nina temple here, placed in a chair and is carried out in front of a vast procession, which goes to meet the coming spirit. The time selected (as if to illustrate the darkness of their minds) is the night season. For hours the procession wends its way in an expectant mood, all the while calling out, "La-mo-o-mi-t'o-fo," a prayer used by the people here. Suddenly the chair-bearers call out, "t'a lai liao, t'a lai liao" (she is come); they say this because the spirit is believed to have entered the image in the chair, which it is said becomes heavier. The people then prostrate themselves and worship, though they do not see her. The chair is then carried to the temple here, and she (the goddess) is worshipped during the "hui," or fair, which is in progress now and lasts for three weeks.

About two months ago, I asked "Wu-ta-sao" (Mrs. McClure's woman, who has been a Christian for eighteen or twenty years), if she knew of any little girls who would like to learn to read. A day or so after she brought one, a nice bright little thing, about nine or ten years of age; the day following she brought another, a younger one. We, that is "Wu-ta-sao" and myself, spent part of every morning teaching them characters and a couple of hymns. One day we noticed the younger one was not as bright as usual, and very soon the tears rolled down her cheeks. On enquiring the cause, we found it was from the pain of her feet. She had on a new pair of shoes, but before putting them on her feet were rebound and the bandages tightened, a process which causes very great pain. While we were singing