

### A Circuit of the Globe.

A. M'LEAN.

#### xxxiii.—Nankin and Round About. (Concluded.)

One day was spent with Mr. Williams on one of his circuits. This one was about ten miles in length. We left the city by one gate and came back by another. He spoke six or eight times. At each village we got down from our donkeys and ordered some tea. The people gathered about us and began to ask questions. They asked our honorable names and exalted ages, where our noble mansions are located, how many princely sons we had. Mr. Williams gave them the facts called for, and then began to speak on gospel themes. As a rule, they listened attentively. Sometimes one would urge an objection or ask a question. This would give him a chance to drive some truth home to the heart and conscience. We spent an hour in a temple. The monks were very friendly. They knew Mr. Williams. He spoke to them about the idols and about the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He did send. The Hia Kwan chapel soon filled. While Mrs. Williams spoke to the women in a separate room, he addressed the men. It was such a crowd as gathered about our Lord or about Paul on his tours. The way they pressed to the front, and the eagerness with which they listened for an hour, showed that he had them in the hollow of his hand. His fluency is astonishing. Few men can speak in English with such rapidity as he can in Chinese. His knowledge of the people, their history, their customs and their manner of life, served him well. When the books are opened, it may be found written "that this man and that man were born there."

The next morning Mr. Meigs asked Mr. Saw and me to go with him on one of his circuits. We were gone two days. The first day we had five services. We spent the evening and night in a temple in a large village. Part of the building is used as a school. The monk in charge was glad to see us, and was assiduous in supplying our needs. He sent the boys home and hastened to cook supper for us. While he was in the kitchen we went out and held a service on the street, and asked all to come to the temple when the work of the day was done. While we were eating, an old woman came in to worship. She lighted a candle on the altar, burned some incense before each of the gods, then went back to the altar, beat the gong and kotowed ten times. Then she arose, blew out the candle and left. Meanwhile the men

of the place were coming in. Messrs. Meigs and Saw sang and expounded a hymn. We asked them if they worshipped the gods. They said yes. They worship the gods of heaven and earth and many others. We asked them why they worshipped. They said their hearts prompted them. We inquired what benefit they received. They promptly replied, "None." We asked them if there was any connection between their worship and their conduct. They answered us that there was not. The pious man is the man that goes to the temples and worships the gods. It matters not how he lives. We tried to learn what they thought about sin. One old man said it was eating meat. He was a vegetarian. Another said that it was an offense done against a man by another. Others spoke of it as a breach of propriety. Others still spoke of it as a violation of the laws. They did not seem to think it had anything to do with the gods. We asked them if there were any reasons why men should not sin. They said that a man ought not to sin in order that he might not be beaten or beheaded. We asked them if they were sinners. They laughed at the thought, and told us that they were Chinese. They regard themselves very much as the Pharisees did when our Lord was on earth. They think that outside barbarians sin; they do not. Toward the close one man admitted that he was a sinner. He was the brightest man present. He was the principal speaker throughout. He was a man of ability and culture. The Spirit of God was at work. That man was convinced of sin. Mr. Saw asked him if he would not then and there accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour. He pressed him to decide. The man was convinced, but for some reason was not willing to make the good confession. He said: "It is hard to decide." The service lasted three hours, and was one of the most impressive I ever attended. The light was dim. Hundreds of gilt idols were about us. Incense pervaded the room. The listeners filled every available inch of space. The faces of many indicated that they were in earnest. After the audience withdrew the teacher placed the desks side by side and helped us make our beds. Before we rose the next morning the old woman came in and went through the same performance as on the evening before. She has done this for twenty-five years without missing a morning or evening. The teacher cooked some eggs and made tea, and sent us on our way rejoicing. He has no faith in the idols. But he burns incense and bows down. He wants us to rent a building in the

village and come regularly. In all the villages we found the people willing to hear the gospel. Mr. Meigs sold Scriptures and dispensed medicine. The people used to fear him. They regarded him with contempt and aversion. On a recent visit an old man said to the people: "These men have been coming here for years. We know them and we know that they are good men." That night there was a feast in the hospital. One of Dr. Macklin's assistants was married, and gave a feast in honor of the happy event. There were about thirty dishes. It was an elaborate affair. Each guest took delight in preferring the others before himself. It was a pleasant evening.

While in Nankin I visited several temples. They are not used much except during the great festivals. Some were used as barracks, others were stored with coffins. I spoke once at the South Gate, and once at the Drum Tower, and once at the Union Service. I saw Miss Lyon's work among the women and children. One evening was spent with Mr. and Mrs. Beebe. They have been very kind to our workers. They are most estimable people. Among many incidents told by the Doctor was one with a dash of humor. One morning he was called to one of the Yamens. The imperial chamberlain died, and his wife thought the proper thing to do was to commit suicide. She had swallowed gold. Her people were in consternation. The Doctor gave her some medicine and withdrew. The next morning he was called again. He found his patient much better. She wanted to know if any evil effect would follow. He assured her that there would not. The incident passed out of his mind in a few days. Some weeks after he was visited by some men from the Yamen and asked if they might put up a tablet in the hospital in honor of his cure. He said they could. They wanted to know if they could do it that afternoon. That afternoon was quite agreeable. About three o'clock a great procession came down the street. The magistrate in his official robes was in command. A company of infantry and a crowd of men bearing firecrackers attended the bearers of the tablet. Arriving at the place the soldiers fired a salute. Ten thousand firecrackers were exploded. The Doctor took the magistrate into the guest room and gave him tea while the carpenters were getting the tablet in place. Then the guns were fired again and ten thousand more firecrackers exploded. On the tablet were four characters in gold. They read: "Divine Perception of Mysterious Devices." All that Dr. Beebe had done

was to give the woman a dose of castor oil. Mrs. Beebe said one thing of which I have thought much. It was to the effect that any one who can make them laugh is a benefactor. The soul is cast down by the pride, indifference, hypocrisy, absurdities, solid ignorance and inveterate prejudice of the people. Poverty and disease make exhaustive drafts upon the sympathies. Virtue goes out. A hearty laugh brings relief and helps one to regain one's usual faith and hope.

#### Li Hung Chang's Address on Missions.

He begins by acknowledging religious truths as the greatest of all truths, concerning, as they do, "the immortal destinies of men," declares that China has only done its duty in protecting Christian missionaries, and pays the missionaries the just tribute (which some of their countrymen have denied) of conceding that their aim is not "pecuniary gains," that they are not "secret emissaries of diplomatic schemes," that their "labors have no political significance," and that they have not "interfered with or usurped the rights of the territorial authorities." He goes further, to the discomfiture of some of our smart naval officers, and declares that the missionaries have provided the "best means" to give the Chinese a knowledge of modern arts and sciences, have established "dispensaries and hospitals to save not only the soul but also the body of our countrymen," and have done their best to relieve sufferers by famine. Nor does he omit to add a word of hearty appreciation of the work of the missionaries in lessening the evil of opium-smoking.—*Independent.*

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