

PROCLAMATIONS IN CHINA.

BY REV. DONALD MACGILLIVRAY, B.D., HONAN.

As you pass through the streets of a Chinese town your observant eye is arrested by the official-looking documents which are posted up everywhere. They bear a red seal, square in shape with characters on it which none but the owner can decipher. It is therefore impossible to counterfeit this cabalistic mark. You naturally think of a bank manager's signature, which only the initiated can read. These documents are further ornamented with vermilion dots and circles at important passages. These are not affixed by the vermilion pencil *par excellence*, that is by the Emperor, but by the local official who puts forth the proclamation. And this proceeding on his part is very common. In this way he notifies the "small common people" of his acts in the past and intentions in the future in regard to the matter in question. There is no press to report for him. So this plan is the universal plan for the Empire. The subjects of these documents are frequently rather startling to the Western, e.g., one issued shortly before my coming to Linching strictly forbade the people to commit suicide, which method of leaving the world had of late become alarmingly prevalent. I understand the proclamation effectually stemmed the tide of suicidal madness. The "black haired" race is said to be very amenable to the threats of a proclamation.

The missionary in China is certain to have, in the course of any lengthened experience, some of these documents issued concerning him, and it is proper that he should study the documentary language which has some peculiarities of its own. Below will be found translations of two proclamations issued in Linching, the first relating to the American mission and the second originating in a case with the Canadian mission, but enunciating rules for all foreigners.

PROCLAMATION NUMBER ONE.

His Excellency Tao, by the Governor of the Province, and appointment of the Peking Imperial Board, Salt Commissioner, Expectant Governor of a Prefectural City, at present Governor of Linching, toth on list awaiting promotion, hereby issues a clear proclamation strictly forbidding in the case of the American pastor, Frances Chapin, and others who within this district outside the West Gate in Western Terrace, have bought a piece of private land and begun to build houses. Lest ignorant and stupid people should go in to spy about and trample as they like, or children in romping and cutting up should hurl tiles or bricks to the hindrance of the work and the causing of trouble, it is meet that this proclamation should be at once put forth. It does not apply to those who may be sent to protect or suppress disorder. On account of this proclamation it is expected that the inhabitants of the aforesaid neighbourhood, together with all coming or going whether they be military or civilian, shall distinctly know that after the issue of this proclamation you must each mind his own business in peace and not go in to look about and trample. It is moreover forbidden that children should go out and romp so as to lead to trouble. If notwithstanding any one dares to disobey these presents, I will have him arrested and taken before the bench when his case will be examined into and a heavy punishment meted out to him. The guilt of ignorant children will be considered to attach to their families. Carefully observe and respect this! Be it further known unto you that the houses which the Americans are building are in general the same as Chinese houses, only the windows and doors being slightly different in plan. There is nothing further strange for you to see; why, then, is not your wonder satisfied? For example, this month, 18th day, a person of this place named Tien desired to go inside and have a look, where upon the head workman, a man of . . . district named . . . came forward to prevent him, so that they quarrelled and reviled each other, each receiving slight injuries. The aforesaid head workman then took the pastor's card and wrote on it a forged charge against the man named Tien accusing him wrongfully of theft, a grave offence. But opportunely the aforesaid pastor immediately enquired into the matter, and forthwith sent the aforesaid head workman under arrest to the yamen where he was examined and punished. The aforesaid Tien was released. All this shows that the aforesaid pastor's bright light is truly great in that he was willing to deny himself in the carrying on of this affair. However, the man Tien has been frightened at the prospect of being involved in a law suit, and besides has already suffered loss. Bethink yourselves, then, and tell me what is the advantage in seeing the foreign houses. The present magistrate of this district loves the people as his sons. He sincerely warns them, not because he fears the consequences of doing his duty, but because he desires to treat (foreign) guests with propriety and must exercise still greater diligence in protecting. Moreover, as the aforesaid pastor is impartial, upright and a delighter in good, I am still more impatient that his dwelling-place should be disturbed.

Let each tremblingly obey this and not disobey a special edict. This proclamation is for the information of all. Kiang Hsu, 15th year, 6th month, 25th day. Be careful to post at the gate of the foreign house.

The foregoing edict illustrates the difficulties which may arise from building large foreign houses in inland China. The foreign consensus of opinion is that the old banker was largely responsible for the ideas here put forth. Any disturbance would have been disastrous to his pocket. The second edict however bears evidence of originality. The first makes no

reference to treaty rights, the second does in one case, quoting the exact phraseology. The circumstances which evoked the subjoined edict are not detailed in the text of the document itself. A brief reference will therefore throw a flood of light in it. Dr. McClure succeeded in renting a miserable little house. The papers were signed, and money paid, so we all sighed with relief, little dreaming of storms. A deputation waited on Dr. Smith to signify that the landlord's grandmother was unwilling to rent the place. The unwillingness of one of the family is a terrible thing to the Chinese. One cantankerous grey head may ruin the most magnificent enterprise. But in this case it was too late and the deputation withdrew. But shortly after an M.A., who lives near by the house in question, seeing that all other measures failed to intimidate us, went to law with the landlord for renting to foreigners without his consent or the consent of the neighbours. The scholar is tutor to some official's children, and the magistrate coincided with his view of the case, beat the man who dared to rent without informing him, and sent him to Dr. Smith to beg the return of the papers and the settling of the case. Result, after much deliberation, return of the deed, request to banker to get us another place, and the issue of the following proclamation.

PROCLAMATION NUMBER TWO.

His Excellency Tao, etc., etc., etc., issues a clear proclamation in reference to the following matter, to wit, foreigners of every kingdom travelling in China are permitted to mortgage or buy houses. I have heard of their residing here. Nevertheless it is necessary to inform the official and clearly state the case, moreover, to carefully enquire if the neighbours and people on the street are all willing to let them peacefully live there, in which case the foreigner may mortgage or buy for a longer or shorter period as they may mutually agree. We may, according to treaty, protect them, but it is reported that there are certain ignorant and stupid people who by no means observe the law, but secretly take their houses and, according to their own pleasure, let or sell them, and by no means inform the official or make a satisfactory arrangement with the neighbours, so that both landlord and tenant are disturbed and much distrust is awakened which has grave consequences in relation to the mutual dealings of Chinese and foreigners. This edict does not refer to persons under official orders. By these presents let all the inhabitants of this district know that henceforth ye must observe this regulation. If hereafter any person desires to mortgage, sell, lease or let his land or houses to foreigners, he must in form the official fully. Besides, the neighbours of the aforesaid land or houses must come to court and signify their consent, upon which it is allowed to draw up a deed and complete the transaction. We will, then, protect them according to treaty. If, however, any one shall dare to cause trouble by transgressing this regulation or should be accused, I shall take the aforesaid landlord and, having strictly examined into his case, punish him vigorously and by no means deal liberally with him. Let all, as is proper, tremblingly respect and not disobey this special proclamation.

Kiang Hsu, 16th year, 4th month, 16th day, etc., etc.

Each province is largely distinct and the officials of Honan may adopt different tactics. But the edict shows how an evil-disposed official may thwart the plans of the missionary. It will never be impossible to find someone of the indefinite "neighbours" who, for a consideration or a hint, will not be ready with a number of very strong reasons why the foreigner should not live so near him.

HISTORY OF THE INDIA MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND.

BY THE REV. S. HOUSTAN, M.A., KINGSTON.

In celebrating last July the Jubilee of the Union of 1840 in Belfast there were many and varied subjects to be touched, and all having an important bearing on Church life in Ireland during the last half century. One of the papers read was on Missions which was ably and comprehensively set forth by the Rev. W. Park who is Moderator this year and who since the death of the lamented Stevenson has been Convener of Foreign Missions. But the mission in India has got this year a nobler monument than Mr. Park's paper, and in saying so we are not disparaging in the least degree the production of the Convener. A paper of such length must necessarily be too brief and all the more so as an attempt was made, as successfully as well could be, to treat of all the missions of the Church: the Jewish, Colonial, Continental, and Chinese, as well as that to India. We refer to a history of the Mission in India, which during the summer was issued from the press, and of which the Rev. Robert Jeffrey, M.A., of Portadown, is the author. We believe that when it was first mooted to write the history it was not with any special reference to the Jubilee, though as it happens the book came out in the Jubilee year. It is possible we are here under a misapprehension. At all events the work was projected before Dr. Stevenson's death, for we are told that that gifted man urged the undertaking on Mr. Jeffrey, and in consequence of that urgency the author entered on the task, which evidently was a loving task to him.

It may as well be admitted here that the writer of this article does not hope all readers to be as deeply interested in the volume and the subject of it as he himself is. There are

in it elements of interest in which of necessity all cannot participate. In the first place for thirty years of my life the Church in Ireland was my church, that of my birth convictions and affections. From the days of my boyhood onward I read the letters that were sent home by the missionaries. I can recall distinctly the interest, the fears, the anxieties that were felt over some of the early converts. In the second place I know the writer of the history very intimately, got acquainted with him at college and have known him ever since. Many a magazine and newspaper article of his I have read with great delight. In the third place, of the missionaries sent out in the sixties I knew most of them well. Some of them are in their graves, some are now retired, some are still in the field, and of all I can say that I cherish the highest regards for them as men, as scholars and as intellectually superior men. They were men of fine spirit and character. Mr. Jeffrey does not say a word about them that I cannot heartily endorse, so far as I had an opportunity of knowing them. These personal references are not very much out of place. There remains however sufficient and more than sufficient to interest the general reader.

It may be added here that we know of no other man outside of the group of missionaries themselves, so well fitted for the work as Mr. Jeffrey. In the providence of God he was for years pastor of a Free Church congregation in the city of Bombay. During those years he visited the field again and again, and was eye witness of the work going on and the progress that was being made. Beside the interest which he took in the mission as that of his own Church and with which he had the warmest sympathy, there were several of the missionaries that were bosom college friends of his in the first half of the sixty decade. No one can read the history without seeing that he used his eyes and ears in those visits to good purpose. He was quick of observation and he was always the man to make an independent judgment of his own. As might be expected he has had access to all the records that exist, not only the printed annual reports and the *Missionary Herald* where the letters of the missionaries appeared, but the books and manuscripts that the Conveners kept for their own use and of that of the Board. Of these a generous but discriminate use has been made. Not only so, he has consulted with living men. In the first place he has had Dr. Glasgow at his elbow, so to speak, all the time while he was writing the book. Dr. Glasgow was one of the first missionaries sent out fifty years ago; he spent twenty-four years in the field and while he lived his interest in and his knowledge of the work continued unabated. Dr. Glasgow lived in Portadown for some years past and hence Mr. Jeffrey could see him daily and consult him at every step in the composition. It seems singularly providential that the book was written when it was, were it to do now it would lack something which never again can be available. Dr. Glasgow died a few days before the Jubilee General Assembly met, and so he lived just to see the work completed. Besides Dr. Glasgow Messrs. Rea and Beatty, who now retire from active service from ill health, made their experience available to the author and one or other of them read every sentence of what was written before it was given to the public. All this gives ample security for the value of the history as a history; it testifies that there is no filling in from the imagination, no mere theorizing. In fact there is evidence on every page that there is a strain on the author to condense rather than to expand. There was material enough for several volumes such as the one before us. And then the style, which is wholly the author's own, is charming; it lends a romance to the narrative. We often hear of the "Romance of Missions," certainly the way in which this book is written is wholly in harmony with that idea. The fine literary ability of the author together with the *con amore* with which he does the work makes the book one that will live. It will take its place among the very best of the books on missions that the press has sent forth of late years.

Next week we will refer to the work of the mission itself and speak of the growth and development of it from the beginning to the present time.

SEVEN WAYS OF GIVING.

1. The careless way: to give something to every cause that is presented, without enquiring into its merits.
2. The impulsive giving: To give from impulse—as much and as often as love and pity and sensibility prompt.
3. The lazy way: To make a special offer to earn money for benevolent objects by fairs, festivals, etc.
4. The self-denying way: To save the cost of luxuries and apply them to purposes of religion and charity. This may lead to asceticism and self-complacency.
5. The systematic way: To lay aside as an offering to God a definite portion of our gains—one-tenth, one-fifth, one-third or one-half. This is adapted to all, whether poor or rich, and gifts would be largely increased if it were generally practised.
6. The equal way: To give to God and the needy just as much as we spend on ourselves, balancing our personal expenditures by our gifts.
7. The heroic way: To limit our own expenditures to a certain sum, and giving away all the rest of our income. This was John Wesley's way.—Dr. Pierson, in *Homiletic Review*.