

After this the Sabbath School of the Better Hope Church met; and at 2 o'clock in the afternoon the East Indian Service was held in the Church. I conducted the service, and Mr. Slater dispensed the Sacrament. There were visible signs which told how large a place he filled in the hearts of these people. Two men were admitted to the full membership of the Church; and their replies to the questions put to them evidenced how thorough was the training they had received.

The work has been begun under most favorable auspices. Mr. Crum Ewing has directed that every assistance be rendered; the Attorney for the Estate and the Manager have been very kind, and have shown every attention both to myself, personally, and to the work; and the ministers of the Church of Scotland in the Colony have extended to me the right hand of fellowship.

"What shall the harvest be?"

JOTTINGS FROM HONAN.

Ch'u Wang, 12 Oct., 1896.

Dear RECORD:—

I have just returned from a brief visit to Hsin Ts'un, and Tou Kung, two of our outstations fifteen miles from here.

It is now a little more than three years since, shortly after my arrival in Honan, I first visited Hsin Ts'un. At that time there were no professing Christians there. None seemed at all interested in our arrival except the idle rabble of the street-loafers, who gathered around to see us put up for the night in the dirty, dismal Chinese inn, crowding into the small room, and tormenting us until we had to put them out.

Well do I recollect how in the evening, after our inquisitive friends had left us, a man, apparently quite an opium wreck, with a friend of his, came to talk about the Gospel; and how I, in spite of my most strenuous efforts to the contrary, fell asleep more than once listening to the hum of conversation between him and Mr. Goforth, in a language of which I could, as yet, understand very little.

The man had spent several months in an opium-refuge in Chang te Fu, conducted by a native Christian from Shansi, and had there heard the Gospel. Being an intelligent man and able to read, he had read most of the New Testament and large portions of the Old Testament, and remembered most of what he had read.

The conversation was continued by candle-light till almost midnight, when the man went away promising to return in the morning. Next morning we had scarcely finished breakfast when he appeared, and spent the whole of the forenoon, questioning and being questioned by Mr. Goforth, a large crowd of natives standing around listening.

His knowledge of Scripture was remarkably full and accurate, considering that he had never before come in contact with a

foreigner, but he was still addicted to the use of opium, his course of treatment at the opium-refuge having proved unsuccessful.

This was my first visit to Hsin Ts'un, and this our first acquaintance with Wang Fu Lin, "gambler, story-teller and opium-smoker." He afterwards broke off the opium-habit at Ch'u Wang, and was in due course of time baptized, and has been doing valiant service during the last half-year, preaching the Gospel to others.

How great the contrast between that visit and my last can be fully realized only by one who has experienced the difference between visiting a town in which he meets only hostile and suspicious heathen, and one in which he has Christian friends. Now we no sooner enter the town than we meet some friend, and by the time we have reached the inn several more have joined us, anxious to see us made as comfortable as circumstances will permit, and to hear and tell all the news that may be interesting.

In the evenings we meet for Bible-study and hymn-singing; and on Sabbath we have three services, which are attended by all the Christians and several others. We have now in Hsin Ts'un six baptized church-members, and fourteen recorded inquirers on probation.

At Tou Kung, six miles from Hsin Ts'un, we have five recorded inquirers, from whom we receive a hearty welcome. Here we spend the day, it may be on the street, preaching and selling Gospels and tracts, or it may be speaking to those who come to see us in the inn. The evenings we spend with our friends in Bible-study and hymn-singing.

The greatest hindrance to the work in these two towns, as in all outlying places where we have converts, is the lack of suitable buildings for meeting in. This is one of the most perplexing questions that we have to deal with at the present stage of our work. For though it would be a matter of no great difficulty or expense for us to erect small churches where they are most required, we dare not do so since we would thus defeat the very object we have in view, viz., the establishment of a self-supporting church in North Honan. Until our native Christians are able and willing to bear to some considerable extent the expense of such buildings, we believe it unwise to build.

There are few lessons the Chinese learn more readily than to look to the foreigners for everything, especially funds, if they receive the slightest encouragement to do so. Hence we seek to encourage them to depend on themselves for providing buildings and all else necessary for carrying on a church among themselves.

This year we have experienced a new difficulty, in having the Roman Catholics coming into our field and seeking to proselytize our adherents and church-members. In some measure they have succeeded, but