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THROUGH FIRE AND WATER IN CHINA.*

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THE news from China has told of terrible deaths by fire and sword, with barbarous persecution of native Christians and their teachers, almost eclipsing that which the early Christian Church suffered at the hands of pagan Rome. But when my thoughts speed back to that far Eastern land, I do not see, as most people do, a multitude so strange and unfamiliar that their sufferings can hardly be realized. Many a face which I have known and loved gazes out at me in dire distress and mortal agony, while some have suffered the loss of friends and all besides for Jesus' sake.

I will sketch but a few incidents from the many which came under my notice before I left China in the spring of 1900, and will relate a few stories of the heroism of converts who have sealed their testimony with their blood. These last are all gleaned from my husband's

letters, since he was able to remain with the converts through the siege and prolonged bombardment preceding the taking of the native city, and afterwards had a large number of Christian refugees under his protection in the mission compound.

In China to-day, as in our Lord's time, "not many rich, not many great, not many noble, are called," and yet there are some of these. Tan-Zse-Tung, son of the Governor of Hupeh, a reformer, executed with six others, without trial, by the Empress, when in 1898 she usurped the throne, had written in an essay—one of the "Tracts for the Times," published by command of the Emperor—that "The Christian doctrine of the immortality of the soul, depending as it does upon communion with God, is of vast importance in the construction of character." The stepmother of this young man was a baptized Christian, who had erected a fine monument over the grave of a medical missionary through whom she had first heard of the gospel of salvation.

Some of the Government medical students of Tientsin, and others being trained in the Imperial University, were accustomed to use their spare time in going through the city streets, selling tracts and preaching Jesus, and several of our Christians in Government service

* Mrs. Bryson has been for twenty-five years a missionary in China, and her husband was one of the few missionaries who was allowed to stay at Tientsin during the terrible days of the siege and after. We abridge this article from *The Sunday Strand*.