

son should do his duty is told from the Honjo district of Tokio. The young man was an itinerant vendor of medicine, and was away from home when the summons to the colors was issued.

The mother went to the district office, secured a few hours' grace for her son, raised a little money by selling some kitchen utensils, and started out to search in one direction for her son, sending a younger boy in another direction. She finally found the young man in a remote village and brought him back to Tokio in time to march with his regiment to the front, though she knows there is little hope for his return.

A condemned murderer in a Tokio prison was brought before the governor a few hours before the time fixed for his death, and, as is the custom, was told that his relatives had left a small sum of money with which he might buy what he wanted for his last meal.

The condemned man had heard that war was declared. He wanted to do something for his country before his disgraceful death, and asked that the money be turned over to the patriotic fund or to the family of some man who had gone to the front.—Exchange.

The Tongue.

'The boneless tongue, so small and weak,
Can crush and kill,' declared the Greek.

'The tongue destroys a greater horde,'
The Turk asserts, 'than does the sword.'

The Persian proverb wisely saith,
'A lengthy tongue, an early death.'

Or sometimes takes this form instead:
'Don't let your tongue cut off your head.'

The tongue can speak a word whose speed,
Says the Chinese, 'outstrips the steed.'

While Arab sage doth impart:
'The tongue's great storehouse is the heart.'

From Hebrew with the maxim sprung:
'Though feet should slip, ne'er let the tongue.'

The sacred writer crowns the whole:
'Who keeps his tongue doth keep his soul.'
—The Rev. Philip Burrows Strong.

The Story of a Pigtail.

I wonder if any of you have ever made a sacrifice for the Lord Jesus as great as that made by a Chinaman living at Hankow, a city on the great Yang-tse River? The story I am now going to tell you I read in a book called 'Intimate China,' written by Mrs. Little; and though the book is meant for grown-up people, it has got so many beautiful pictures that it would interest even the youngest of you.

In many parts of China, as I expect you know, small feet are thought very beautiful; indeed, it is considered quite a disgrace for a woman to have feet of a natural size. A full-grown woman has often feet no longer than three inches, and very sad it is to see her tottering about on these little deformities. Chinese mothers bind the feet of their little girls to prevent their growing, and it makes one's heart ache to think that these poor little children suffer in order that, when they grow up, they may have 'lily feet.' As the Chinese become Christians, they learn that it is against God's law to deform their bodies, the temples of the Holy Ghost; but it is often very hard for them to stand out against the national custom.

The Chinaman, about whom Mrs. Little tells us, was a Christian, and of course knew it was wrong to bind his little girl's feet; but, as his wife would do it, in spite of all his entreaties, he sent his daughter away from home

to an American Mission School. There her feet were unbound, and when she came home she was able to walk, and had nice rosy cheeks, unlike most Chinese girls, who can only hobble with a stick, and whose faces are pale, because they are in such pain. The good father was pleased to see his child so well and healthy; but after a time he noticed that she was walking worse and worse every day, and he therefore knew that his wife must have begun to bind the child's feet once more.

At first he had not the courage to remonstrate; he had done it so often, and with no result, that now, for the sake of peace, he held his tongue. But the neighbors noticed, too, and were quick to see that he was not behaving as a Christian should. 'A nice one you are to talk,' they said, 'you, who are seeing your own daughter lamed before your eyes!' The taunt stung him. He knew that he was an 'apostle of Christ' to his fellow-countrymen, and that if he was to win others to his Master, there must be nothing inconsistent between his professions and his life. So he went to his wife and told her she must unbind their child's feet, for not only was the girl becoming lame, but God's work was being hindered.

His wife replied, as often before, that she would unbind, not only her daughter's feet, but her own too, if he would cut off his pigtail; a thing which she, of course, believed he would never do, for a Chinaman's pigtail is his glory. 'Do you mean what you say?' he asked her; and when she had assured him seven times in succession, and each time more vehemently than the last, that she meant what she said, he quietly took up a pair of scissors and cut off his queue. There it lay, the long glossy coil, like a black serpent on the ground, and soon the whole neighborhood was astir with excitement. Had the man gone mad? Even the missionary to whom the pigtail was brought could at first hardly believe that the act had been done in soberness.

But no, our Chinaman was both sane and sober. 'It is true it is contrary to the law of the land,' he said; 'but it is better I should offend against that than offend against my God.' You will be glad to know that his wife unbound both her own feet and her daughter's, and thus he had the happiness of knowing that his sacrifice was not in vain. No true sacrifice ever is; but we do not always see the results of right-doing at once; any more than we see directly the results of wrong-doing. Sooner or later an action always bears its fruit. The Chinaman laid his pigtail at the feet of Christ, and may there not be something which the Master requires of us?

I am sure you must all wish to be used by God; but, if so, you must obey his commands. Perhaps he has not yet asked of you any great sacrifice, as he did of the Chinaman; but at any rate he does want you to pay attention in school hours to your lessons, for perhaps it may be those tiresome French verbs or puzzling sums that some day he will use in his service.—Margaret A. Rolleston, in the 'Christian.'

Pictorial Testament Premium

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The Story of the Sea.

'Lord, save us: we perish.'

(The Rev. James Learmount, in 'Examiner'.)

I once saw a terrible storm. It was when I lived on the north-east coast. I remember my brother and I were aroused at about four o'clock on a December morning by the booming forth of the guns indicating that a ship was in danger. We dressed hastily and hurried down to the pier, where we found hundreds there before us. We got along with great difficulty in the face of a strong, north-easterly gale. It was an awful morning. The snow and sleet were cutting. We were drenched to the skin. When we got down to the pier, we found that the lifeboat could not be launched on account of the storm, but the life-saving apparatus had been run down, and was already at work. As our eyes got accustomed to the gloom, we saw a large steamer coming rapidly along by the side of the stone pier towards the sands. Suddenly she struck a rock and sank, leaving only the tops of the two masts and the funnel visible. Amongst the white foam we could see that the men in the ship had crowded to the tops of the masts and the funnel. Rocket after rocket was fired, but without success. In ordinary weather we could have thrown a stone on board. We could hear the sailors crying piteously for help. Then suddenly one of the masts went over, and an awful cry of horror ran along the pier from the assembled thousands. Then the other mast went overboard with more men, and we could hear their shout as they were thrown to the waves. Then the funnel went with the remaining men. The men had been firing the rocket apparatus all the time in the hope of establishing a connection between the sea and the land. But there was no help in man. Only the captain washed ashore, and he just gasped and died. I remember being at my own place of worship that Sunday morning, a service at which the captain of that wrecked vessel had also hoped to attend, as was his custom when at home. Oh, how helpless we all felt that day! Within a stone's throw of home, yet beyond all help of man. We realized our own helplessness as never before.

I think the storm which led the disciples to cry out, 'Lord, save us: we perish,' must have been something like the storm I have described, and they evidently feared a similar fate.

There are some things I like about these sailors. They did their best, and as long as ever they could. It was only when they had done all they could that they cried for help. This storm scene is an acted parable for us. It indicates for us the true way to live. We are to do the best we can with God's help, and then to leave the result in God's hands. You are entitled to God's help and blessing when you are doing and have done your best. God will help any boy or girl who is really trying to do their best, but no effort, no honest attempt—no help. As Mr. Spurgeon says: 'Help is on the road, and will not fail to reach us in due time, for he who sends it was never known to fail.'

In asking you to do your best before you can really expect his help and blessing, God shows his love. Were it otherwise, what feeble souls we would become. The storm and difficulties and troubles of life are our best friends if they are faced and conquered; and if they are so hard that you feel you must look to God for help, so much the better. God wants you to learn to look up for help under the ordinary circumstances of your life.

An American, speaking of the dogged perseverance of his nation, gave as an illustration the case of his own father. 'My father,' he said, 'failed in business six times, and then