

she learned that, through His followers, God shows His love for little children, and when last heard of the little Galician girl was growing up in that Christian home, sharing the love and kindness that made it beautiful and helpful.

Toronto

### The Little Famine Refugee

*By Rev. J. R. Menzies, M.D.*

The church bell had just stopped ringing, and the school boys began to march from the schoolyard into the church. In a steady line they marched, each one a little shorter than the last, till a small bundle of a boy, loaded with a big Testament and a Hymn Book, popped through the gate, making the tail of the procession.

"Who is that little chap?" some one asked, and the answer was, "Why, that is Shu Hai, the famine refugee."

Shu Hai's father was once a banker away off in Chihli province, where he had a comfortable home. He was never wealthy, but at one time the family had three meals a day and could eat bread of white flour; and though the children did not need much in the way of clothing in the summer, when the weather became cold, the mother could manage, by using over again the old clothing and making some new ones, to keep them all warm.

When Shu Hai was born, there was great rejoicing, because there was food enough to feed another mouth. And, anyway, he had not been born a girl, and that was always something to be thankful for. He was a fine, healthy boy, but his face was badly disfigured by a hare-lip. Now, if Shu Hai had been a girl that would have been very bad indeed, for girls all have to be sold when they grow up, and no one would want to buy a girl with a hare-lip. When he was born, the old nurse was very careful not to wash his beautiful black hair, or in fact any other part of him. Chinese, have all, or nearly all, glossy black hair, and it is because they are careful not to wash the color out of it. If foreign mothers were wiser, and did not wash their babies' heads so much, instead of having brown or red hair, they would all have

beautiful black hair too. At least that is what the Chinese mothers say.

But Shu Hai's head was clean shaved, all but two round spots above each ear, and from each spot sprouted a little pig-tail. Later on these were shaved off, and only one round spot was left on the top of his head from which grew his queue.

But hard times came—no more white flour, no three meals a day. Either from drought or floods, crop after crop failed. The bank had to be closed and many people were on the verge of starvation. Shu Hai was only five years old when his family, with many others, left their homes, perhaps never to return, and became famine refugees. Every stick of furniture had been sold to buy food. Even the beds and the bedding were gone, and their clothes were thin and ragged though the weather was cold. People said that, away hundreds of miles to the west, in Shensi province, food was plentiful. So every day there could be seen a long line of famine refugees on the road to Shensi. The old people who could not walk were pushed on wheel-barrows, and the parents carried the very little children. Sometimes people gave them a little food, but food everywhere was scarce. The feet of the children soon became sore and bleeding from walking, as their cloth shoes were worn into holes on the rough roads, and they were so tired and hungry. At night they slept, or tried to sleep, in some temple, huddled together to keep a little warm, with only the cold brick floor beneath them and not even a single quilt to cover them. Then, in the morning, without any breakfast, they began again their weary, weary journey.

But they never reached Shensi. One day they reached Hwaiching Fu. It is a good thing there were missionaries there, for they could not have traveled much farther. Little Shu Hai was very weak, and for some time we feared he could not live. But with proper food and care he recovered, and later on the doctor fixed up his hare-lip, making him fairly good-looking.

One day he appeared in a wonderful costume. One of the ladies had given his mother some clothing to use for his sisters; but the mother had a better plan than that. She just