

off to Constantinople to try to get work. Friends, however, followed him and brought him back, considering that his project was a crazy one. He was actually imprisoned this year because of his inability to raise 80 cents as part payment of taxes. And yet he has always been and is still one of the most respectable and honoured of the Christians of this district. He is our oldest Protestant, and our work in that district owes more under God to him than to any other half dozen men there. His tale of persecutions borne for "farmasonism," as they call Protestantism here, would fill a not uninteresting chapter in the "Tales of the Covenanters." I spent a whole month in that district this summer. I collected together our four helpers there during the month of July, and gave them lessons in theology, sermonizing, English commentary and Bible introduction. I enjoyed it greatly, and the students seemed to be greatly benefited. On Sunday I circulated through the district, and became more intimately acquainted than ever before with the condition of the people. They are a most industrious, hard-working people, being in their fields with the rising sun, and do not return to their homes until after sunset. Their food is mostly bread and a crude kind of cheese. Their garments—Sunday and Saturday the same—look as though the wearer had been well tarred and then plunged into a rag bag. Every one who has any credit is heavily in debt. Wheat, for lack of means of transportation, is, in that district, 18 cents per bushel. Circassians (robbers and cut-throats)—emigrated from the Caucasus—loan money at from sixty to 300 per cent. per annum, and men are compelled to borrow in order to pay their taxes. These Circassians collect their dues on time at the edge of the sword. In case the debtor fail to raise the money by selling his ox, or cow, or sheep, or bed—house furniture there is almost literally none—the creditor takes him into a species of slavery until the debt is paid by labour—the wife and dependents being left to beg. One village this year, in utter despair, carried the title deeds of their lands, along with their oxen and sheep, to the seat of government, and said to their pitiless rulers: "Take what we have, and pay the taxes yourselves, we can do no more." Last summer Koordish bands, some of them in the employ of Government officials, roamed the country, and robberies were of nightly occurrence. I sat up in my tent one night till after midnight with my gun and cartridges in my hands, awaiting an attack. But the Koords had come for the village sheep, and as I had called the shepherd with his flock to my vicinity, and had also called out a band of villagers to act on the defensive, the Koords thought it wise not to attack. The Koords were all armed with Martini-Henry rifles, and had plenty of ammunition. The Christian villagers are not allowed to possess a gun of any sort except old flint locks,

which they quite possibly inherit from Togamah, or, more likely, Tubal-Cain. It is a crime also for them to buy or sell powder. On the whole I think this the most viciously governed country on the face of the earth. I myself, during my short stay in that place (meek and forbearing as missionaries always must be, and I always try to be), got into a hand to hand fight with a captain and two or three soldiers, in which fight I used my loaded English riding whip on the captain's head, and got a handful of my beard pulled out. One soldier put a cartridge in his rifle, and was about to shoot me, but was prevented. How the blood of one who has had a taste of liberty boils in this land! Were I a native Christian of this land, I would certainly follow the example of the outlaw David. God be praised for the picture of that noble outlaw which the Bible, most just of all books, blesses the world with!

The following, from the *Missionary Herald*, will have a melancholy interest for us now: Many hearts, the world around, will be saddened by the sore affliction of the West Central African Mission, in the death of Mrs. Clara Wilke Currie, which occurred in Bailundu, September 24, 1886. Mrs. Currie, a niece of the late Rev. Dr. Henry Wilkes, of Montreal, was the only daughter of James and Matilda Wilkes, of Brantford, Ontario, Canada, where she was born February 14, 1857. She was married March 11, 1886, to Rev. Walter T. Currie, and sailed with him and Mr. and Mrs. Fay from Boston the same month. It was a sudden sickness, in no way connected with the climate, which took her from her stricken husband, from the associates who already loved her tenderly, and from the work to which she had given her life. The missionaries, who had written home expressions of their warmest satisfaction with this new helper, the "sweet, lovable and gentle lady," now mourn deeply for themselves, as well as for her husband and for the mission. Thoroughly educated and heartily consecrated, cheerfully leaving the comforts and luxuries of home for Christ's sake, she seemed to have every prospect of a long life of usefulness. We can only humble ourselves under this deep disappointment of man's hopes, praying with all prayer that the bereaved parents and husband may be comforted and upheld by the almighty hand of God. May the mission too be strengthened by the redoubled faith and prayer and sympathy of all who love the Lord.

Her sickness was short, but full of suffering. Messrs. Saunders and Fay with their wives had gone on to Bihe some three weeks before, so that Mr. and Mrs. Stover were the only Americans with Mr. Currie at the time of his wife's sickness and death. The casket in which the precious remains were buried was made and fitted by their hands, and the king gave