

the Chinese Bible before he reached China; and though he found it entirely different, he was not long of being able, after his arrival, to speak also in the "colloquial." And though the "colloquial" of each province turned out to be different from that of every other, he soon made himself master of it, in whatever form he required to use it—thus acquiring, in fact, not one, but four or five distinct languages. To identify himself more thoroughly with the native population, and gain the readier access to their homes, he wore for many years the Chinese dress, and conformed to their social usages; eating, for example, as they do, and eating, too, of their food, not always quite wholesome, and never so nourishing as his *physique* would have required to sustain it. His Bible was constantly in his hands—it was, in fact, his library as well as his travelling companion—and he became notable not only in the villages which he visited, but in Peking itself, as "the Man of the Book." It is known that when the native converts were exposed to persecution in violation of the British Treaty, he repaired to the capital, and through the intervention of the Hon. Frederick Bruce, the British Ambassador, procured redress from the oppression of which they complained. The Earl of Elgin previous to that—at the instance, we believe, of Lord Panmure, the Secretary of war—asked him to be interpreter to the British army, and though he felt it his duty to decline that honorable appointment, treated him ever after with the utmost respect and kindness. Such was the position, in fact, that he achieved for himself by his spotless life and his self-denying labours, that "he wielded an influence in the Celestial Empire beyond any other individual connected with the actual administration of the State." Some years ago, when a Wesleyan missionary from Hong-Kong, who happened to be in Edinburgh, was asked by a gentleman who met him in a friend's house, "if he knew a brother missionary out there of the name of William Burns?" his astonished and half indignant reply was, "Know him, sir?—why, all China knows him! He's the holiest man alive!"

"How abundant was his labours"—we quote again from the Dundee newspaper—"how remarkable his power of endurance, how wonderful the perils which he encountered, and his deliverance from them all—how many congregations he formed and nurtured, ceasing not day nor night to plead with all within his reach to be reconciled to God—and how, after a life of toil and anxiety and devotedness to the cause of his Lord and Saviour, he sunk under the exhaustion of his frame, and entered into his rest, it will be the task of his biographer to record." The legacy which he

has left to the Church in his noble example, is one which, we trust, all her ministers, and especially her young aspirants to the ministry, will know how to value. Few such bequests fall to the lot of any single generation. And never was such a testimony more needed than in this luxurious, self-indulgent age. To follow literally in his steps would not, perhaps, on the part of others differently constituted from him, be expedient or wise. But to emulate his devotion, and self-denial, and love to human souls, to "follow his faith"—his simple, strong, unwavering faith in Christ's gospel and in Christ himself—from which all his other excellencies sprung, is evidently the duty to which, by his removal, the Head of the Church is calling his servants everywhere—whether they be ministers at home or missionaries abroad. "Whose faith follow, considering the end of his conversion"—i.e., the close of his faithful life—contemplating, making a study of it, as an artist does of his model. He died at Newchwang, Manchuria—the most northerly port in China,—his newest field of labour, where no missionary had preceded him, and none remains behind him, on the 4th April last, and there, "post tot discrimina rerum," he has found his quiet grave. "Our friend sleepeth." The following is a copy of the last letter he wrote, which was addressed as well as written in his own hand, to his mother, and dated January 15, 1868:—

"TO MY MOTHER,—At the end of last year I got a severe chill, which has not yet left the system, producing chilliness and fever every night, and for the last two nights this has been followed by perspiration, which rapidly diminishes the strength. Unless it should please God to rebuke the disease, it is quite evident what the end must be; and I write these lines beforehand, to say that I am happy and ready, through the abounding grace of God, either to live or to die. May the God of all consolation comfort you when the tidings of my decease shall reach you; and, through the redeeming blood of Jesus, may we meet in joy before the throne above!—WM. C. BURNS."

Appended to this letter, though in another hand, was a list of the texts which he had preached from to the British residents since his arrival at Newchwang.

The first is John iii. 14, 15: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness." &c.

And the last (on December 29,) Rev. xx. 11-15, "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." &c.