

SAD NEWS FROM FORMOSA.

By Rev. Dr. G. L. Mackay.

Tamsui, Formosa, 12 Aug., 1898.

Rev. R. P. Mackay,

Dear Bro.—Last Monday about dawn Rev. Tan He's soul entered glory. On Tuesday 2nd inst, he came here and remained with us until Thursday morning. He walked and talked with me on the college grounds for two hours, but showed no signs of weakness or fatigue tho' the weather was hot and oppressive. On returning to "Sin-tiam" he continued at his accustomed work until Sabbath evening. Then conversed with his son Chheng Gi till 10 p.m., and—strangely enough—retired to my usual sleeping room when there.

At midnight he arose, feeling ill; but soon after fell unconscious at his son's feet. Everything that loving hearts could devise was done but of no avail. A Japanese doctor was sent for, but he was unable to afford relief. Without uttering a word he went home at 5 p. m.

Was it apoplexy? That is uncertain, considering his predisposition and symptoms. Asphyxia perhaps was the cause of death.

It was painful when I received word of his dangerous illness. But think of the shock as I was about to start, when a telegram announced his death.

Koa Kau and our son George accompanied me, and we had to remain over night in Bang-Kah. The next morning we set out for Sin-tiam, and arrived at 8.30 a. m.

I never visited the place with such feelings, but will not intrude them upon others. We entered the church, and there lay the coffin on benches in front of the platform. The lid was gently removed, and we gazed at the familiar face for the last time.

At 1 p.m. I spoke to the weeping Christians standing around the departed. Then we went to a lovely spot amid the everlasting hills and laid his remains in the narrow bed. All sang

"For ever with the Lord."

and separated with mingled feelings.

Heathen villagers asked and obtained permission to join the funeral procession.

The following is a brief account of Rev. Tan He's life. It is from his own pen and sent to me when in Canada:—

...
I was born in 1851, at Tamsui, where my father was a trader. I went to school from eight to seventeen years of age, and then our family moved to Go-ko-Khi, and worked a small farm.

We were all idolaters, and I was leader and worshipped all sorts of idols and spirits. I also burned incense before the moon!

In July, 1872, I went with my father to Tamsui, and saw a new kind of worship in

your little Chinese house. I heard you read aloud the Ten Commandments. The next time I went you spoke about one Jesus; and the third time I heard about the Holy Spirit. All seemed good and true, and I soon ceased bowing before gods of clay and camphor wood.

In October of the same year I became your student, and studied during 1873. On February 15th, 1874, I was baptized at Go-Ko-Khi.

I then went to Sin-Kang, to preach for a few months. Returning I labored in Go-Ko-Khi, and He-Sin-Chin,—and in 1876, I labored at Toa-liong-pong. Next year I was stationed at He-sin-chin. In 1878, I preached at Khoe-chin and Sin-tiam.

Tho' at the chapels on Sabbath, I spent five days a week along with others studying under you. Our college was Kelung Cave—sea-shore, mountain's side, bamboo grooves, and under trees like the large Banyan at Pat-li-hun.

In 1884, the French attacked Formosa, and all the Sin-tiam Christians were plundered, many beaten, and several killed by the enraged heathen. Myself and family narrowly escaped from the mob.

In 1885, I was ordained a native pastor and went to Tiong-Kang, whilst you built the present beautiful stone church at Sin-tiam.

From 1888 to 1891 I assisted teaching in Oxford College. Afterwards I preached at Sek-Khan; and in 1893 the Sin-tiam people undertook to support me at the rate of \$204 (Mexican) a year and I have been here amongst them ever since."

It has been truly said that we should not expect Christians from heathenism to be on a level with those from a long line of Christian ancestry. There are notable exceptions, however, and Rev. Tan He is one. Here is a native lifted at once to a high level of Spiritual power. A man full of the Holy Spirit and daily manifesting the Spirit's fruits. "This one thing I do" seemed to inspire him in his daily life. What one thing? To work and work for Jesus Christ, for the salvation of souls.

Think of his life and labors for twenty-five years!

Think of the thousands who heard the Gospel from his lips!

Think of the hundreds who rejected idolatry through his influence.

Think of the scores saved by his instrumentality!

Think! Let no one dare whisper "Missions a failure."

He told me repeatedly of Japanese officers who were at the chapel and how gentlemanly they treated him. He spoke lovingly of them, and I know from various sources that the Japanese held him in high esteem. Rev. K. Kawai, Japanese pastor, bears similar testimony.