

## A Runaway River.

Many of our readers have read of the strange freaks of the Hoang-ho or Yellow River. We have sometimes laughed at the idea of a great river being so fickle as to change its course as suddenly as a spoiled baby throws away one toy and grasps another. But the desolation that follows such a change is a thing to weep over. Some of the missionaries of the China Inland Mission, who are in the flooded province of Honan, write:

"Poor China! Her troubles, when they do come, are huge enough. A smiling province, one of the richest among the eighteen, has suddenly been overwhelmed with a flood. The Yellow River, sweeping away four miles of its embankments, has turned a large portion of Honan into a lake. Cities, great and small, and innumerable villages, have been submerged.

"The damage it has done is terrible. Just fancy a vast plain, about half the size of Scotland, thickly populated, suddenly turned into a raging sea! This is what has taken place here, and one trembles to think of the great numbers that have been drowned. Misery reigns supreme in this place just now. Out of fifty-six streets in our portion of the town, only five are not flooded; the others are all destroyed, and perhaps as many perished by the falling of houses as by drowning; yet one hardly knows whether to think those who are drowned or those who escaped the more fortunate, for those who perished are at least saved the misery of dying from cold and starvation. You would weep, as I did, were you to see the terrible desolation and distress that abound, and feel helpless, as I do, to relieve them. 'Bread, bread!' is the one cry; but bread is not the only thing they need. Hundreds have escaped with their bare lives; their little all has been lost. They are huddled together in straw huts, with scarcely enough to cover them, and the nights are getting bitterly cold. Words cannot describe the scene. The distress will continue for many months to come; cruel winter will soon be on us, and hundreds will perish from cold. If the break in the river's bank were to be stopped up right away, the water could not be drained off the land in time to sow next year's crop, so there will be a famine. Even were the water to be dried up, the people could not sow, for all the present year's harvest that was safely gathered in, has been swept away, and they have no seed to sow."

Mr. Paton, of the British and Foreign Bible Society, says in a letter to the *North China Herald*: "The river is all coming this way now, and a racing, mad river it is, and I fear the damage in Ngan-hwuy and Kiang-su provinces must be added to the misery inflicted here. It is the most populous district in all Honan, and I can quite safely say millions are driven out of all they possessed."

The Chinese government estimate the number of victims at seven millions, and are taking measures for the relief of the sufferers.

## In the "Tiger's Den" at Kashmir.

In the great province of the Punjab, India, some fifteen hundred miles north-west of Calcutta, lies the city of Sialkot, which is the centre of missionary work carried on by the United Presbyterian Church of North America. The city is not far from the boundaries of Kashmir and the Himalaya Mountains. The population is about one half Hindu and one half Moslem, and they are very bigoted. Whoever among them turns to the Christian faith will meet the bitterest opposition, as the following story will clearly show.

It was in the year 1866 that Kanaya, the son of the head man of the village of Naya Pind, twenty-six miles from Sialkot, said to an associate, Bhajna, who had become a Christian: "With all my heart and soul, brother, I am with you. Let come what may, I will go with you and be a Christian." Kanaya was a most affectionate husband and father, but Ramdei, his wife, though loyal to her husband, felt that it was a deep disgrace to have her husband become a Christian. Their parents and kindred, and indeed the whole village, were in a state of great excitement. Some of them began with entreaties and tears to beseech the converts to turn back to their old faith. Others were more violent, and thronging the house where Bhajna and Kanaya were, shouted: "Seize them; beat them; beat them to death!" The two men, escaping from the angry crowd, sat down to read some of the words of Jesus. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."

Being thus obliged to leave his own home, Kanaya sought to induce his wife to bring their children, whom he desired to teach in a Christian way, and live with him; but she was firm in her unbelief, and her relatives and the villagers sought to make the children hate their father. These villagers of Naya Pind made a plot to kidnap Kanaya and make away with him, and for three long months he had no sight of his wife or one of his five children.

At last he determined to enter a legal suit before the English court to obtain possession of his children. Ramdei made no objection to this, and the summons was served. The kinsmen and neighbors, both Hindus and Mohammedans, appeared in the court, joining in the chorus of weeping and howling, and beating their breasts, but the court issued the decree that Kanaya should have his children. The end of his troubles now seemed near, for it was believed that Ramdei also would come to live with him if he obtained possession of his children. But when Kanaya went to Naya Pind, his wife and children were nowhere to be found. The neighbors scoffed at him. "Kanaya cannot see his wife and children." They had been carried away, no one seemed to know where. For five long months no trace whatever could be found of the lost ones. Occasionally Kanaya would be told that if he would forsake Jesus he could learn where his family were, but the temptation was quickly repelled.

After a time one of Kanaya's relatives divulged the secret. Ramdei and the children were in the village of Jundi, in the kingdom of Kashmir, and she was a servant in the house of Deva Singh, who was one of the most cruel tyrants. A message came from Deva Singh: "Tell Kanaya that if ever he come hither, so sure as I see him, I will shoot him or behead him, and his blood will be upon his own head." It certainly seemed as if the case was hopeless, and Kanaya was advised by most of his Christian associates to give up the effort to regain his family. He would only lose his own life in the attempt.

But the Christian company was continually in prayer for their afflicted brother, and Kanaya himself held fast to his belief that the Lord would yet give him his family. One day he suddenly announced to his associates: "Brethren, I will go up to Janu, in Kashmir, and present my petition to the king himself." Humanly speaking, it was a hopeless undertaking, and the brethren could not advise him to run the risk. They called it going "into the tiger's den." But a young Mohammedan servant, who was attached to the Christians and enjoyed their confidence, agreed to go with him, and the brethren could only give their consent, and unite in prayer that God