

SAN-POH,

OR

NORTH OF THE HILLS.

A NARRATIVE OF MISSIONARY WORK IN AN OUT-
STATION IN CHINA.

BY

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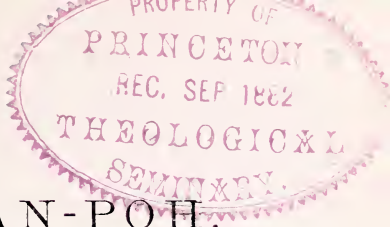
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SAN-POH.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST VISIT TO SAN-POH.

IN the autumn of 1856, Rev. F. F. Gough, a missionary of the Church of England, and myself started out from Ningpo, China, on an itinerating or preaching tour. We directed our course to a region of country which had never before been visited by foreigners, called San-poh, which means "North of the Hills." Many other places farther in the interior had been visited by missionaries, but this had been passed by, as it was re-

moved from the usual line of travel, and contained no large cities or towns of note. It was also regarded as a section whose inhabitants were unusually rude, lawless and uninteresting. Perhaps these reports had excited our curiosity somewhat. At least, for some reason or other, we determined to go "North of the Hills" and see for ourselves the people who lived there.

We started in the usual travelling boat of Ningpo called *u-bong jün*, "dark-covered boat." This craft is about thirty feet long and six wide in the middle. The body or hull is about two feet and a half high. This is covered by a thick bamboo matting, but so as to form an arch. The mat being painted black on the outside

gives the boat its name. Even in the middle, this covering is not high enough to admit of standing in an erect position. About two feet from the bottom a platform is made of movable boards, on which passengers spread their beds, while baggage and merchandise are placed underneath. The boat is divided into three compartments. About one-fourth of it at the stern is devoted to the two boatmen. Here they have their cooking apparatus, a few bowls and their chop-sticks which they use in eating, and some wood for cooking, and also their bedding, which they spread on the movable floor or platform. On this one of them sleeps while the other propels the boat with a long scull-oar.

There is also a small compartment

about six feet long in the bow, where we place some of our baggage, and where our servant sleeps. Close to the partition dividing this compartment from the middle is a hole for the mast, as we use a small sail when the wind is favourable. The boatmen go forward and back on a narrow rim outside. The middle, generally about six by fifteen, is occupied by passengers. We use the movable boards to make a platform over about one-half of it, on which we spread our beds. The remaining space contains a small table and one or two chairs or benches. In pleasant weather the back cover of the front compartment is removed and affords light and ventilation. Here we often come to enjoy the luxury of standing up and looking at the

country around us. When the weather is rainy, as it often is in that climate, the mat is drawn over this open space also, and we are entirely shut in, having only one or two holes on each side, about four inches square, through which we can look out. These too sometimes have to be shut in rainy weather, in which case we only have the light and air which find their way through the cracks and crannies of the mat covering. These are the boats in which we not only travel, but cook, eat and sleep for days and sometimes weeks together.

Such a boat Mr. Gough and I engaged, storing it with four or five days' provisions, and tracts for distribution; and taking along a servant to cook for us and look after our boat when we

were on shore. We generally start in the river with the evening tide. A great many boats have been waiting for the turn of the tide, and when the flood begins to flow inland all start together. We find ourselves surrounded by scores, and perhaps more than a hundred boats in company with us. Boatmen and passengers often recognize old acquaintances, and there is a great deal of talking and shouting, asking and answering questions, and indulging in wit and pleasantry. In a short time, however, the boats are separated, some moving faster and some slower: the passengers make their beds and prepare for the night's rest; the lights are put out, and nothing is heard but the noise of the scull turning on its socket, accom-

panied, perhaps, by the low song of the boatman with which he whiles away the night watches.

In the forenoon of the second day, just before reaching the city of Yuyiao, we turned off from the main river into a branch which runs to the north, and in an hour or two reached the head of river navigation. In proceeding upon our journey, we were now obliged to make the ascent from the river level into the canals above. To effect this the Chinese use mud-slides, instead of locks, and the boats are drawn up by means of windlasses turned by one or two scores of men. At these mud-slides, called in that part of the country *paw*, we often find a large company of boats waiting for their turn. As strangers from abroad,

we are generally allowed to take the precedence, especially if we pay the *paw-men* a slight additional fee. The crowd of boatmen good-naturedly open a way for us, and feel compensated for the slight delay by the sight of a foreigner, the gratification of being heartily thanked for their politeness, and a few tracts distributed among them with the request that they will present them for us to some teacher or scholar in their village. The boatmen themselves are very seldom able to read. When the bow of our little craft touches the bottom of the slide or inclined plane, two large cables made of twisted bamboo are handed to the boatmen, one from the windlass on each side, and a large noose on the end of each cable is

slipped over the stern of the boat, and the men begin to turn the windlasses. The inclined plain is kept slippery by being wet, and the boat moves gradually up. When it reaches the top, the men at the windlasses stop for a moment to receive their usual (or in our case rather unusual) fee; then a few more turns, and we slide down the other side of the paw into the canal.

After passing this point, we found ourselves in San-poh. This is a flat country lying between the hills north of Ningpo and the Hang-chow bay. On our largest maps the place is hardly discoverable. It is about thirty-five miles long and perhaps fifteen wide. It is all dotted over with villages, and cut up with canals as numerous as the roads in this country,

and contains between one and two hundred thousand inhabitants. San-poh may, in many respects, be taken as a sample of the populous plains throughout the whole empire of China. There are no fences or walls except those around the houses. There are no pasture-fields. The whole country is under a high state of cultivation, and every foot of available land is brought into requisition to supply sustenance for the swarming inhabitants. You see very few houses standing by themselves: even the farmers live in villages or hamlets for the sake of mutual protection. The principal productions of this part of China are rice—on which the people chiefly subsist—and cotton, tea, wheat, tobacco, Indian corn, and a great variety of

vegetables; and most of the fruits which we have, though of an inferior quality.

In most books on China we read a great deal of the vast extent of the country, and its numerous and populous cities, and the wealth and resources of the empire. In this small volume I intend to speak principally of the rural inhabitants of San-poh, but will at the outset give some general information about the Chinese Empire, which, together with its dependencies, covers a considerably larger area than the United States and its territories. China Proper, generally called "The Eighteen Provinces," because it is made up of eighteen provinces, is a country more than half as large as the whole territory of the

United States stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and these eighteen provinces are all inhabited by a very dense population. Most of them contain each about two-thirds as many inhabitants as the whole United States. Every province has its capital city, surrounded by massive walls of solid masonry of great height, and from eight to fifteen miles in circumference. These provincial capitals contain about one million of inhabitants each—some of them considerably more. There are also between one and two hundred walled cities considerably smaller, corresponding to our country towns. Besides these, there are more than a thousand walled cities still smaller, corresponding to the chief village in a township with us. They

generally contain one or two tens of thousands of inhabitants each. These cities were all built, and many of them were old, when our country was an unbroken forest inhabited by the Indians. Surrounding these walled cities are almost innumerable unwalled towns and villages, similar to those which we found in San-poh. These villages are never indicated on even the largest of our maps of China, though some of them contain four, six, or even ten, thousand inhabitants. The names which fill up these maps are all designated walled cities, and not a few of these are omitted.

The first principal town which Mr. Gough and I visited was Ming-ngoh-dziang. It contains, I should judge, about four thousand inhabitants, in-

cluding many families of high literary culture and some of great wealth. When we entered the place, immense crowds of people followed us, for most of them had never seen a white man before. A white skin appears very strange to them, as they are about the colour of our American Indians, and resemble them in some other respects. The boys, all wild with excitement, shouted at the top of their voices, "*Hung-mao nying læ-de*" — "The red-haired men have come." This is the name they always give us. Every Chinaman has long, coarse black hair; and they were much surprised, when they first met with foreigners, to learn that they have hair of various shades and colours. They were particularly astonished at those

who had red hair, and so called us all by this name, for they had no other, and could not perhaps think at first of a more appropriate one. We found a place in the town before a temple where there was a large space of ground nicely paved, and here we stopped while a noisy crowd gathered round us. In a short time the boys were somewhat quieted, and the people, when they found that we could speak their language and were disposed to be friendly, began to gratify their curiosity by asking questions, as they are very glad to do under such circumstances: "Do rice and wheat grow in your country?" "Do you have twelve months in the year, as we have here?" "Do you have horses and cows and pigs and chickens, as we

do?" "Does the sun shine in your country, as it does here?" "How did you come here, and how long were you in coming?" While we are answering these and similar questions, those nearest to us are feeling of our boots and the cloth of our coats, and making remarks in an undertone about the different articles of our dress, the whiteness of our skin, the prominence of our noses and the colour of our eyes and hair. The people are generally kind and friendly, and we soon get acquainted with each other. When we have secured their attention, we have a good opportunity to preach to them. We speak of the God who made the earth and sky, who thunders in the heavens, causes the rain to fall, and supplies all our

wants as our heavenly Father. Also of our ignorance and disobedience, and of the Saviour who came to reconcile us to God and prepare us for heaven. These doctrines seem very strange to them, for their country is filled with idols and idol temples, and they are all worshippers of idols. It is difficult for them to understand clearly what we mean. But they do understand in part, and they go home and talk about what we teach. In this way the truth finds an entrance into some hearts, and will, we trust, like good seed, spring up sooner or later and bear fruit.

We spent several days going from village to village, conversing with and preaching to the people, and distributing tracts. In one place called Sing-

s-gyiao the people treated us with some rudeness, showing that their character had not been altogether misrepresented. On the whole, however, we were rather pleased with them. There was a kind of outspoken frankness and earnestness about them. We went back to Ningpo very tired, but glad that we had made this visit, and that we were able to give so favourable and encouraging a report of the inhabitants of San-poh.

A short time after our return, Mr. Russell, also a member of the English Church Mission, made another trip to San-poh. The previous visit of Mr. Gough and myself had excited a good deal of interest, and was much talked about even in places which we did not reach. In some of these villages there

was a class or sect of religionists who seemed desirous of acquiring a knowledge of some religion better than those that prevailed among their own people. These heard of us, and learned that wherever we went we requested the people to ask questions, and took special pleasure in answering them. They said that this opportunity was just what they wanted, and that if we should ever come again they would ask questions without end. When it was known in San-poh that Mr. Russell was visiting among these villages, they immediately sought him out and requested an interview. He was as much surprised as delighted to receive into his boat a company of men who appeared to be earnest inquirers after the truth. They were

not scholars or men of wealth, but seemed intelligent, thoughtful and very original in their views, as compared to the great mass of their countrymen.

Mr. Russell found that they belonged to a sect called the *Wu-wei-kiau*, or *Dzô-kiau*, the "Do-nothing religion," or, as some translate the latter term, the "Tea religion." They professed a disbelief in and abhorrence of idol-worship, and of the different rites and meritorious works practiced by Buddhists. They believed, they said, in turning the thoughts inward and giving attention to religious contemplation, and to cultivating the better feelings of our nature. Hence their name, "Do nothing." They expressed a deep interest in the Christian religion,

because it appeared to them much like their own, and they hoped to find in it, in a fuller and completer form, the truth for which they were seeking. A further acquaintance with them, however, showed that, notwithstanding their interesting and hopeful character in a religious point of view as compared to the Chinese generally, they had very confused ideas of what they believed, and had only exchanged one form of idolatry for another. Though they professed to have renounced Buddhism, many of their doctrines were identical with those of that system. They believed in the transmigration of souls, and were very strict vegetarians, regarding it a sin to destroy animal life. In their places of worship, instead of offering their

homage to idols, they erected a tablet on which they inscribed the names Heaven, Earth, Emperor, Parent and Teacher, and presented before this tablet offerings of bread and tea. This is the reason given by some for their being called the "Tea religionists." They had not been able in searching to find out God, and had no idea of the one supreme Ruler of the universe. So utterly helpless is fallen man to recover himself from his wanderings from the only true God!

An effort was immediately made by the missionaries of the Church of England to instruct these people, and a new out-station was established among them. Most of them, when they became better acquainted with Christianity, and found that it sanctioned the

use of animal food, and required the observance of every seventh day as a day of rest and religious worship, and tolerated no religious homage paid either to heaven, earth, emperor, parent or teacher, were as decided in their opposition to it as any other class. The hearts of a few, however, seemed opened to receive the gospel: other natives outside of the *wu-wei* religion were interested, and the new station gave promise, from its very beginning, of being a successful one.

CHAPTER II.

DAWNING LIGHT.

SOME months before the occurrence of the events referred to in the former chapter, a man named Zia Ying-tong was introduced to one of the missionaries at Ningpo as an inquirer. He was a clerk in a shop in the city, the business of which consisted principally in selling articles used in idolatrous worship. He became acquainted with the Christian religion through a friend named Dzing Shih-nyiao, who was a Christian, and often spent evenings conversing

with him about foreigners, foreign countries, and especially the new religion which the foreign teachers were introducing. Zia became much interested, and soon acknowledged his love to the Saviour and his desire to profess his faith in him. He was a quiet and unpretending man, honest-hearted, outspoken and earnest. Mrs. Zia, his mother, was opposed to his being a Christian, and was enraged when she found that her son persisted in the determination in opposition to her wishes. He had always been dutiful, and had hardly ever before refused to obey his parents in anything. His mother was now a widow. She belonged to a very respectable family and was in tolerably good circumstances. She had a strong will,

and was accustomed to rule in her own house without her authority being questioned. An older son occupied some official station in the city; this younger one, she hoped, would be a successful business man. She was a very religious woman in her way, and years before, when Ying-tong was but a boy, she had often taken him with her while she went from temple to temple to worship the idols. Ying-tong would carry her little basket containing incense-sticks and candles to burn before the idols, and a lunch for them to eat at noon, for they often stayed away worshipping in the temples nearly all day. Like other Chinese woman, Mrs. Zia had very small feet. Nearly all the little girls in China, when about five or six years old,

have their feet tightly compressed with bandages so that they hardly grow any larger afterward. With feet only three or four inches long, it is of course difficult for them to walk. Mrs. Zia, when tired, would put her hand on Ying-tong's shoulder to steady her tottering steps, as mothers in China are apt to do. I have no doubt she felt proud of him, and often thought what a comfort he would be to her in old age and widowhood. It is not strange that, from his kind and loving mother's example and teachings, he too learned to worship idols.

Now, however, he had found the better way. His eyes were opened to the folly and sin of idolatry and to the loveliness of the Saviour's character. But his mother could not understand

these new doctrines. She thought her son had been deceived and led astray by the foreigners. It seemed to her that he was almost insane. To become a Christian was in her view to disgrace himself, and her and his family, and their ancestors, to insult the gods which they worshipped, and to provoke their anger and punishment. When she found that kind entreaties were of no use, she insisted upon exercising her authority as a mother, and declared that he should not become a Christian. She even went so far as to bind him with cords and make a prisoner of him in the house. She would occasionally go into the room to see him, and insist upon his giving up his foolish notions and promising never to go to see the foreigners again.

When she found that his purpose was still unchanged she would threaten and curse him, and beat him with a stick. It seems strange to us that a grown man should submit to such treatment even from his mother, but Zia Ying-tong knew that if he should resist his mother by force, it would excite great opposition among friends and neighbours, who would say that the first effect of this foreign religion was to make sons unloving and undutiful. He told his mother that while he should always love her and be an obedient son in other things, he must in this matter do what he felt and knew was right. She assured him that if he took this course he would be disinherited and disowned, and would be left without any means of

support. He replied to this that he would go about the streets with a burden on his back as a common peddler, rather than not be a Christian.

Mrs. Zia, after she found that all efforts to shake the purpose of her son were useless, was obliged from necessity to allow him to do as he pleased, though she continued to treat him with much coldness and severity.

Not long after his baptism he was solicited by Miss Aldersey to assist her in the conduct of her girls' boarding-school. Miss Aldersey was an English lady, who from an early age had felt a strong desire to serve Christ as a missionary. After being prevented for years from entering this work by domestic ties which seemed necessarily

to bind her to her home in England, she was at length, at the age of forty, permitted to carry out her cherished purpose, and devoted her life, her fortune and her untiring energies to the work of bringing Chinese women to a knowledge of Christ. At the time of which I am writing she was at the head of a girls' boarding-school in the city of Ningpo, numbering more than fifty pupils. She very much needed a reliable native to assist her in the varied and trying duties necessarily connected with such an establishment. It was this position which Zia was requested to occupy. He at first promptly declined the offer, for the following reasons: The heathen Chinese often account for their people becoming Christians by saying that

we hire them, and that they are influenced only by mercenary motives. They apply to them the familiar adage: "*Ky'üoh-nying ih-un, t'ing nying s-hwun*"—"If you eat a man's rice you must do what he bids you." Zia had resolved, in order to show his people that he had become a Christian from far different motives, not to enter the employ of foreigners in any way. But he was strongly urged to reconsider this matter by those who felt that it was his duty to become Miss Aldersey's assistant, because it seemed the best opportunity afforded him of doing good and serving the Master. He was prevailed upon after a time to enter this school, and attended to the duties required of him in a manner most satisfactory.

In the course of a few weeks, Miss Aldersey found that she did not require all of Zia's time in the school, and determined to employ him as a colporteur. As the attention of missionaries was then attracted toward Sanpoh by the events which I have detailed in the former chapter, Miss A. was disposed to send him into that vicinity. The missionaries of the Church of England, with a Christian liberality which has always characterized them, cordially welcomed us to labour there with them. In visiting this region of country as a colporteur, Zia took lodgings with one of the inquirers connected with the English mission, who resided in the village of *Siao-gyiao-deo*, while he made frequent excursions into the surrounding vil-

lages, distributing religious books and tracts and telling the simple story of the cross.

While there on his third or fourth visit, we received a letter from him in Ningpo, the purport of which was as follows: "There is a great interest in Christianity here, and every night large numbers of the villagers assemble at my stopping-place, and I talk to them till a late hour. You know I am but a learner in the school of Christ and imperfectly fitted to do his work: please send Lu Sin-sang to help me." The position in which the Presbyterian mission was now placed was this: We, or rather the majority of the missionaries, from the prudence or perhaps slowness which has too often characterized us, had, until this time, adopted

the principle of not sending our native assistants away from us to labour by themselves, but kept them with us as our attendants and under our constant watch and supervision. Miss Aldersey belonged to the Independent Church in England, and was in every respect an independent woman. There being no mission of that body of Christians in Ningpo, she had connected herself with our church, and the Christian girls in her school had followed her example. Without consulting us, she had sent Zia, one of the more recently received members of our church, to tell his countrymen the story of "Christ and him crucified," and God was manifestly owning and blessing his labours. What should we do under these circumstances? This seemed

evidently the call of God, and all acquiesced in sending Lu Sin-sang to San-poh, agreeably to Zia's desire. A short time after the mission took formal action, appointing me, as I was the pastor of the native church, to take charge of the work in connection with Miss Aldersey.

When Mr. Lu had been in San-poh a few days we received a letter from him containing the following information and request: "The number of interested persons is increasing. I have talked till I am hoarse and almost ill. Please send Dzing Shih-nyiao or Ling-yiu to help me." These native Christians went and returned bringing with them still more encouraging reports. Their presence and object became known to all the inhabit-

ants of the village, and many came in the evening from a distance of several miles to hear of the new doctrine. A few soon openly declared their belief in Christianity, and afforded a great deal of assistance to the native preachers. Others opposed their teachings as inconsistent with those of Confucius, and as dangerous and revolutionary in tendency. Warm discussions arose. Among those who took a strong stand in favour of Christianity was an old man who had a small shop in the village, in which he sold paper money and incense, which are burned in idolatrous worship. When convinced of the folly and sin of idolatry, he openly burned these articles, determining to have nothing more to do with them, though his

largest profits had been from their sale. This singular course in a person well known in the village attracted a good deal of attention and remark, and many went to visit Nyün-pang, as they called him, in his shop, and inquired what these things meant. Some would enter into discussions with him and endeavour to dissuade him from his purpose, and others tried to make sport of, and railed at and abused him. He was always good-natured and conciliating in his replies to these different classes of persons, and often told them that he was not a scholar nor used to controversy; and sometimes, taking them by the sleeve, he would urge them to go with him to where the Christian teacher was and talk with him. In

this way many strangers were brought to the native teachers from Nyün-pang's shop. By degrees, the people, even educated men, were afraid to enter into controversy with these defenders of the new faith; for it seemed that special wisdom was given to them, "which all their adversaries could neither gainsay nor resist." A person possessed of a knowledge of Christianity has a great advantage in discussion with one who is ignorant of it, for he defends a system which is clear and consistent, and feels confident in his position; while the defenders of idolatry are always involving themselves in new inconsistencies. The converts, even those of the humbler classes, acquired great boldness and success in giving a reason for their

faith, and found that with truth and Christ on their side they could stand before learned men and "princes." Christianity was familiarly called in that region the "*Poh-feh-tao-go dao-li*"—"The doctrine which cannot be thrown down."

In a short time twenty or thirty persons were reported as openly acknowledging their faith in Christ, and wishing to unite with the church. I determined not to visit Siao-gyiao-deo for some months, but to leave the work in the hands of the natives through whom it had been begun, only giving them counsel and direction as they needed it. I feared that the curiosity and excitement which my presence among them would necessarily occasion might interfere with

the interest which had followed the preaching of the natives, and was purely a religious one. A considerable number of the inquirers, however, visited me at Ningpo, and I had long and interesting conversations with them. We determined, while giving them all the Christian sympathy and advice which they needed, to defer their baptism for a time, until their sincerity and firmness should be tested. It was not long before new difficulties arose, which they had not anticipated, and the zeal of many grew cold. The Christians found that there was no friendship nor sympathy between the Church and the world. They met with opposition, abuse and annoyance from their neighbours and relatives. The owner of the house

where the native preacher stopped was threatened with violence because he had received and assisted these "preachers of corrupt doctrines and disturbers of the peace," as the native preachers were called. The doors and windows of the house where they were stopping were more than once carried away and hidden during the night, and the Christians were insulted and annoyed in many ways. The observance of the Sabbath also presented a serious difficulty. Many of the inquirers were employed by landholders as labourers in the fields, and were in danger of losing their places and not finding others if they should persist in resting every seventh day. Some were shopkeepers, and were told that they would not be patronized by

the villagers if they did not keep their shops open every day. The carrying out of this requirement of Christianity was generally spoken of as utterly impracticable and impossible in China. Strict abstinence from all connection with idolatrous rites and ceremonies was another serious matter, and occasioned constant misunderstandings and disturbances in families which contained one member who desired and endeavoured to follow the teachings of the Bible.

As the result of these various difficulties, one after another of those who had felt disposed to identify themselves with the religion of Jesus withdrew from the companionship of Christians, and the general interest and excitement which prevailed for a

few weeks passed away, and crowds of curious listeners no longer assembled at the house where the gospel was preached. Those who still adhered to the new faith were not openly persecuted as at first, but were in a measure avoided. Christianity had been freely talked about in every family in the neighbourhood, and most of the people were acquainted with its prominent doctrines and usages. When we conversed with them they generally admitted that the doctrine was good, and no doubt the very best for us, but insisted that it did not suit their circumstances.

About six months after my first visit to San-poh with Mr. Gough, I started again for the village of Siao-gyiao-deo in company with elder Lu

to examine candidates for admission to the Church. We reached that place in the evening, and leaving our boat proceeded unobserved to the rented house which was occupied by Mr. Zia. The house where they stopped at first had proved too small and a larger one had been procured. Mr. Zia had also married one of the Christian pupils in Miss Aldersey's school, and was now living here with his wife. When we reached the house we found several inquirers seated around the table and earnestly engaged in studying the Scriptures. We spent a very pleasant evening with them. The whole of the next day, which was Saturday, was occupied in the careful examination of candidates for church membership. Several of those who had been to

Ningpo to see me several months before did not make their appearance. A few came to express their sympathy and their regrets, saying that they believed in the gospel and would like to be Christians, but they could not take this step at present, on account of the opposition of relatives. I do not know that one of them ever found "a more convenient season" afterward. A few who expected to be received were put off for the time, as they gave evidence of imperfect views of Christianity or of unworthy motives. It was determined to receive seven persons into the Church on profession of their faith the next day. These consisted of the old shopkeeper Nyün-pang, a relative of his, Yi Loh-ding, the keeper of the village school,

Lo Sih-peng, the fish-peddler, and his wife, two farmers from a neighbouring village of the family named Du, and a field-labourer named Zông-we, from still another village.

It was noised abroad among the people that certain religious rites or ceremonies were to be solemnized the next day in the chapel, and curiosity drew a large audience to witness them. The house which we had rented was the principal building of a large family residence, which had been sold on account of poverty induced by opium-smoking. It was now owned by a wealthy member of the same family, who lived in another part of the village. By taking down a partition we were provided with an audience-room or chapel which would seat more than

one hundred persons. In the upper story were two sleeping apartments and a large room occupied by a school taught by Zia's wife.

Before it was time for the services to commence all the seats in the chapel were occupied, and the courtyard was filled with men and women, who were looking in at the doors and windows and engaged in loud conversation. It was difficult to know how to proceed under such circumstances. It was important on this first visit of the foreign teacher to establish a precedent among the villagers for order and good behaviour; as well as to preserve that quiet and solemnity which were necessary in order to secure the pleasure and profit of those who were about to take upon themselves a Christian

profession. I therefore commenced with an introductory address to the people, aiming at removing their prejudices, giving them a correct idea of the exercises in which we were about to engage, and restoring quiet and order. The large audience gradually became quiet and attentive, and conducted themselves with more propriety than I at first anticipated. The service appeared to have a very happy effect on all who witnessed it. The sacrament of baptism in the name of the sacred Trinity, symbolizing the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, furnished a topic for many conversations in heathen homes. So of the Lord's Supper. The people were very curious to know what it was which was eaten

and drunk. They imagined the bread and wine to be some mysterious medications, which would have a magical effect upon the minds of those who partook of them. This sacrament was fully explained, not only in the service, but afterward in conversations of the native Christians with their neighbours, so that much Christian instruction was imparted. The practicability of natives becoming Christians was also illustrated; and the faith of the converts was confirmed by taking this formal step and entering into this everlasting covenant. It is a pleasure to add, that of the seven who that day took upon themselves these vows, all have been consistent witnesses for the truth. Five are still living: two have "fallen asleep."

CHAPTER III.

THE LEAVEN WORKING.

MR. ZIA now took up his home in the village of Siao-gyiao-deo in San-poh as a colporteur or native assistant. He was diligent in improving his opportunities for study, and progressed rapidly in his knowledge of the Scriptures and in facility in teaching others. He did not belong to the literary or educated class of China, though he had acquired in boyhood a tolerable knowledge of books, to which he was constantly adding by study. He felt a good deal of diffidence and hesitation

in taking the position which we urged him to accept. He always spoke of himself as a plain man, and made no pretensions to scholarship, professing only to teach the truth which he believed and loved in the simple language of the common people. Even literary men, however, treated him with respect, and accorded to him the title of Sin-Sang or teacher, which I shall also give to him hereafter in this narrative. The manner in which he was regarded by all who knew him strikingly illustrated the important statement of our Saviour, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The counsel and assistance of his excellent wife, who had enjoyed the advantages of several years' instruction in Miss Aldersey's school, were

invaluable to him, and without her co-operation he would hardly have been equal at first to the performance of the duties of his new station.

From this time it was my habit to visit San-poh every two or three months. The object and character of these visits may be gathered from letters which I wrote home at that time. The following extract from a letter dated August 8, 1857 gives some account of my next visit to Siao-gyiao-deo in company with the native elder Zia Sin-Sang

“We reached this place last night after a hot, but on the whole not unpleasant, trip. I find the people all glad to see me, and the news which I am permitted to hear of the converts is very encouraging. While we derive

much satisfaction from the deportment of those who have been received into the Church, we have reason to be thankful also that several did not enter who confidently expected to do so. Zia is ill with fever and ague. His wife is very well. The son of the fisherman is delighted with the idea of going back to Ningpo with me to attend school. He just came up and offered to go and get a cloth to dust my table. I allowed him to do so, and then had a conversation with him. He seemed very much disposed to talk on the subject of religion, probably because he thought that doing so would please me. When he told me that he was in the habit of praying, I asked him what he prayed for, and he repeated a form of prayer which gave

evidence that he had been well instructed by his parents. He has been accustomed to gather sticks or brush from the hills for his mother to use in cooking, and seems to think that he will be very much missed. When I asked what she would do without him, he replied, 'Jing-ming we pao-yiu—' 'God will provide.' He stands by me while I am writing, and holds down the corners of my sheet when they are blown up by the south breeze coming in at the window. He is a very interesting boy of thirteen.

"*Morning.* It is a quiet, cool and beautiful morning, and I will spend a little leisure which I have before breakfast in writing. Yesterday afternoon I had an interesting call from the proprietor of this establishment.

He is a man of wealth, and has been a business man and a traveler. He is now more than seventy years old, and is adding to the infirmities of age by opium-smoking. He came with three of his grandchildren—two of them beautiful little girls about twelve years of age, and the other a little boy about three. The old gentleman has great simplicity and kindness of manner. Strange to say, these two girls attend Mrs. Zia's school. I was pleased to hear the old man call upon the little boy to recite the first part of the Christian San-z Kyng (rhymes for children in sentences of three syllables) which he had learned from his sisters. As the little boy hesitated, the grandfather repeated over the first few lines for him. This shows how the influ-

ence of the school and of the chapel is extending into the families of the village. After a pleasant talk with them, and I had given them a few grapes which I brought with me from Ningpo, they left, seeming much pleased with the call. In the afternoon I went down into the village to call upon the old shopkeeper, and say a pleasant word to the people generally in the way of 'mông mông' (paying my respects). When the sun was nearly down I took a walk to the nearest hills, which are about half a mile from our hired house. They are covered in part with small pines, and afford a fine view of the busy plain below, cut up by a complete network of canals, and filled with almost innumerable villages. It is a great relief to get

away occasionally from the crowds of people, and enjoy the quiet and refreshment of the hill-top, and its comparatively pure atmosphere. In the evening a few of the neighbours assembled for prayer. Since I commenced writing the fisherman's boy has again made his appearance. He takes great pleasure in waiting on me, as I have no servant, and is just coming up stairs with my breakfast, which consists of rice and eggs. I am getting to be an adept in the use of chopsticks.

“On Sunday an unusually large number of people assembled at the morning service, though it was in the midst of rice-harvest. Owing to a desire to get forward and see, the audience was very noisy; and after

trying in vain for some to bring about such a state of quiet as I determined should be obtained before proceeding, I stopped the service, to be continued up stairs, inviting all who wished to attend it to do so, except children. It was rather a bold step to take in the country, and in a hired house in China, and might under other circumstances have ended in a confusion and a mob, but the people acknowledged the propriety and necessity of the step, and after they had been let in one by one, and the door was shut, we had a quiet, pleasant meeting in the large upper room. There were no new additions to the Church, but I had interesting and encouraging conversations with the church members. I should have stayed longer, but Zia

was taken very ill with a high fever, accompanied with alarming symptoms. We left in a hurry at 5 P. M., in order to put him under medical treatment as soon as possible. Before yesterday morning his fever left him, and his case seemed much more favourable. Yesterday noon the flood-tide met us just as we reached the quarries at Da-Ying, and I found a delightful retreat from the heat in visiting the deep excavations in the hills and stopping in the shady nooks of the rocks. The midday heat was trying, but the night was cool and refreshing. As it was moonlight, I spent much of the night outside, partly for the sake of urging the boatmen, and partly to take my turn with them at the scull, which I enjoyed much. By the way,

I am becoming somewhat expert at sculling, and it requires a strong native boatman to outdo me. Last night, after getting the city gate open, and helping Zia and his wife to their quarters at Mr. Russell's house, I reached home about twelve o'clock. I am glad to say that my health still continues remarkably good for summer. I am very particular, and shall be, to avoid all unnecessary exposure and to be prudent in every way, and hope, by the blessing of God, to escape serious sickness. To-day it is very hot, and I am most happy that I reached home when I did. I shall now have no occasion to make another excursion into the country until cooler weather. The two boys whom I brought with me from San-poh are already in the

school and give promise of becoming useful men in the future."

As might be inferred from this letter, the climate of Ningpo and San-poh is far from being healthful, especially in summer. To say nothing of the impure air occasioned by the dense population, who do not give that attention to drainage and cleanliness which we do, nearly the whole country is flooded with water for the purpose of rice-culture, and the malarious exhalations under a summer sun cannot but be injurious. Very few escape chills and fever of a very severe and stubborn type. I was never entirely free from it for about five years, and more than once, on my return from these excursions to San-poh, after the reaction from hard labour and excite-

ment, I have been laid aside by a severe "shake" and the fever which follows it. In such cases we use quinine freely, which is almost sure to relieve us for the time.

The two San-poh boys were, I believe, the first who were sent to the boys' boarding-school by Christian families. Previously, the most of our pupils were from heathen parents and the poorer classes, who were obtained by holding out the strong inducement of giving them a good Chinese education free of charge. The boys are first taken on trial at the age of from ten to fourteen years, and if they prove satisfactory are indentured to the school until they are about twenty, we supplying them with food and clothing, giving them thorough instruction

in the Christian religion as well as in the Chinese classics, and having the entire charge and control of them. A considerable proportion of the members of this school, and also of the girls' boarding-school have become Christians, and now form the principal part of our earnest and efficient native labourers. The fisherman's boy lost his health not long after he entered the school, and died, we trust, a true believer in Jesus. The other completed the term of his indenture and became a good scholar, a consistent Christian and a promising candidate for the ministry. After leaving the school he taught Christian day-school in one of the villages of San-poh.*

* I have learned since writing the above that this young man died of fever in the summer of 1868.

The reader may be interested in more particulars respecting places and persons with which I became familiarly acquainted in my frequent visits to San-poh. I always enjoyed meeting with old Nyün-pang. He must have been at that time near seventy years of age, and was somewhat infirm. The people are not generally as long-lived in that region as they are with us. He belonged to the Yi family, which comprised most of the inhabitants of the village. His given name was Ah-nyün, so that his full name, speaking accurately, should have been Yi Ah-nyün. But he was familiarly called by all the villagers, among whom he seemed to have been quite a favourite, Nyün-pang, "Old Uncle Nyün," and by that name I

always called him. The name of the village, Siao-gyiao-deo, means Small Bridge Head. It is taken from an arched bridge which crosses the canal in about the centre of the village, which is rather a small and straggling one.

Nyün-pang's shop was near the bridge. It occupied a strip of ground about eight feet wide and twenty feet long, one end of it being on the street and the other on the canal just back. The half toward the canal was his sleeping-room. The little shop on the street was, I suppose, pretty well filled before Nyün-pang became a Christian, when he sold tinsel paper and incense for idol-worship. But now it seemed very scantily supplied. He sold turnips, sweet potatoes and fresh and salt fish. His whole stock in trade

was not worth more than twenty dollars. At night he slept in his single bed just on the side of the canal, but had become so accustomed, I suppose, to the noise of the boats and boatmen, which were constantly passing, that he hardly noticed them. His wife had been dead for many years. He took his meals with his son, who at first was disposed to be a Christian, but afterward joined with his wife in opposition to what they generally spoke of as the foreigners' religion. Nyün-pang, though poor, was habitually contented and happy, and seemed almost unconscious of a want unsupplied. His little shop was a favourite place of resort for old men like himself, and others who had leisure to visit him, and he always

had a pleasant word for every one. For years before we visited San-poh he had had the reputation of being a religious person, according to the Chinese idea of the term. He was careful to attend to all the idolatrous service practiced by his people; he always picked up scraps of printed paper to keep them from being trampled upon or soiled: was careful not to use improper and immoral language, and exhorted others to lead a virtuous life, as he tried to do himself. It seemed as if he and several of the other converts were a "people prepared for the Lord," and as soon as the Saviour spoke to them through his revealed word, they heard his voice and followed him.

I wondered sometimes how Nyün-

pang had acquired so much Christian knowledge, as he could not read, and very often went to sleep during our public services. I found, however, in conversation with him that he was very familiar with the plan of salvation, the general outline of Bible history, the most common arguments with which to meet native opposers and objectors, and could quote very aptly many passages from the Bible and the hymn-book. It was evident that the native preachers had been faithful in instructing him, and also that he had been taught of God. It was a treat which I always looked forward to with pleasure to have a quiet talk with Nyün-pang when all the services of the Sabbath were over, and others had retired to their homes

after evening worship. At such times his face was animated, his tall form would straighten and he would show something of the fire and enthusiasm of earlier years while he spoke of his faith and his hopes and his joys. He seemed as much attached to his old rookery of a shop as any king to his palace. "Oh!" said he, "I am so happy down by the bridge! I go to bed at night and get under my 'comfortable' and then spread over me my old fur coat, and tie it to my finger by a string lest some thief should take it away from me in the night; and I think of Christ and of heaven. One night in my dreams two angels appeared to me. I saw them distinctly, and they spoke to me words of love and consolation. I said to them, Yes,

I belong to the same king with you, and I too will soon be absent from the body and present with the Lord." I said to him one evening "Nyün-pang, when you think of the goodness of God in sparing your life to hear and believe in the gospel, and of the happiness in store for you in heaven, do you not feel like saying as Simeon of old did, 'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation?'" He paused a moment as if to interpret his own feelings, and then replied, "No no—I want to do something yet for Christ. I cannot do much, but there are some women who come to my shop to buy turnips, and I can speak to them. I want to see the glory of God displayed in this village. I want to

labour for the conversion of my countrymen. No not yet, not yet."

The fisherman, or rather fish-peddler, Lo-Sih peng, or, as he was more familiarly called, Yia-læ was also a rather interesting character. He frequently visited me at Ningpo before his baptism, and thought nothing of walking across the hills in one day, a distance of about forty miles, and going back the next day. It was his habit to rise very early in the morning, and go to some of the neighbouring villages to buy fish of the fishermen, and then he would spend the day selling them from village to village and from house to house. With his burden in two baskets, one suspended from each end of a pole resting on his shoulder, his coarse straw hat, bare legs and straw

sandals, he appeared outwardly like other men of his class. He soon became known, however, as altogether different—as a believer in and a preacher of the religion of Jesus, and his preaching has not been in vain. Months before he was baptized he had established in his home the family altar, and there he and his wife and two children together bowed in prayer to God. He was a man of a very active and inquiring mind, and took great delight in devoting his leisure hours to study, and made rapid progress not only in Christian knowledge, but also in general reading and information.

I will not take time to speak of the interesting traits of character belonging to other converts, nor of the

various trials and temptations to which they were all more or less subject.

Extracts from another letter relating to my next visit to San-poh, in which I was again accompanied by Elder Zi, will give a view of other labours and experiences there. It is dated Ningpo, October 31, 1857: "When I last wrote you, near to two weeks ago, I was just starting for San-poh. I reached that place last week, Friday morning. Friday and Saturday I spent in the immediate vicinity. On Sunday I administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We had a delightful day. I am glad to say that we still have reason to rejoice over every one who has been admitted to the Church, and that they

all show evidence of increasing faith and knowledge. In the evening I enjoyed very much a long conversation with some of them on the grace of God and the prospects of the future.

“The next three days were spent in a very interesting and encouraging trip in the western part of San-poh. I have seldom addressed as attentive and interesting audiences. I was surprised to find so many large and flourishing towns and such multitudes of smaller villages. I have not time to notice all the places visited or all the incidents met with in our route. After passing an old walled city during the first day, we arrived at night at a large town. It was already dark, but I went on shore to acquaint the inhabitants of my presence, and

tell them that I would talk to them after supper. A crowd soon assembled, and I had the boat stationed at a convenient place near the shore, and addressed the people from it. It was a bright moonlight night, and I spoke for more than an hour to a large audience, who seemed exceedingly attentive and interested.

“The next night we reached another old walled city near the Hang-chow bay, almost concealed among the hills. We arrived early enough to visit one of the principal temples before evening, and promised to come out again to speak to the people after supper. I requested them to name a place for meeting, and they suggested the four corners, where the principal streets of the city meet. Zi being aware that

he would be of no use in such a crowd as he knew would congregate, remained in the boat. On reaching the place appointed, I found an audience assembled, and heard as I approached that they were wondering whether I would come or not. As soon as it was known that I had arrived, the people gathered from all quarters, and I had a very large audience. Though they were as quiet as could be expected of such a crowd, and indeed as quiet as they could be, I was obliged to desist before I had spoken as long as I wished, for fear of injuring my throat. It is our desire to have this district, and others as well, gone over by the native assistants. Zia and Loh-ding are engaged in San-poh; Shih-nyiao and Ling-yiu are in the vicinity of the

lakes; Lu and Vong-ching start tomorrow for Mao-san; Zi stays for a few days in the school. We are about making several changes in the mission: First, establishing a plan of itinerations and colportage to be carried on by the natives; second, determining upon a system of examinations to be sustained by boys in our school before they can be employed by us as teachers; and third, fixing the qualifications and examinations to be required of candidates for licensure, and taking those who wish to become native preachers regularly under the care of the presbytery. I hope these plans will severally prove very useful in preparing the native evangelists for their work."

CHAPTER IV.

CONVERTS INCREASING.

OTHER inquirers applied for admission into the church at Siao-gyiao-deo, and among them an old woman in whom I was much interested. She had spent many years in laying up merit, and preparing for death and a future state of existence, according to the methods practiced by idolaters in that part of the country. The Buddhist priests tell the women who come to their temples that when they die their souls will go to the land of spirits, and there wander about

perhaps for ages; and that while in that place they will require a great deal of money to pay their expenses for lodgings, travelling and making presents to the officers who preside over those regions. The priests offer to sell bank bills to those who come to their temples to worship, for which, they say, real money will be paid in the land of spirits. So the poor women buy these paper bills, on each of which is printed a promise to pay the one who holds it one thousand pieces of silver in the future state. When the money is paid to the priest for one of these pieces of paper, it is signed and stamped with the great seal of the temple. The women are also informed that to make this money really valuable they must chant over

it the name of the god they worship three thousand times. This name is in their dialect *Na mi o mi da veh*, a title of the goddess Buddha. So the women, after choosing a place in the temple in front of a large image of the god, and burning incense and prostrating themselves in worship, commence chanting *Na-mi o-mi-da veh*, *Na-mi o-mi-da veh*, as fast as their lips can pronounce the syllables. It requires a large part of the day to repeat this name so many times as are deemed necessary. It is to such ceremonies as these that our Saviour refers when he speaks of the "vain repetitions of the heathen." These women no doubt feel that they have been doing a good work as they go home at night carrying with them these worthless bills;

and as they accumulate month after month and year after year, and are carefully deposited in a safe used for this purpose, the possessors of them regard themselves as very rich. When the owner of these fancied treasures dies the paper is burned, and is supposed to pass through the flames to the spirit land.

The person of whom I am speaking had collected a large quantity of this paper money, and on this account was almost envied by her neighbours. She was also kind and pleasing in her manners, and a general favourite. Most persons of her class are so proud of their pious lives (for they are generally regarded as such by their neighbours), and of their stores of merit, that they are indisposed to

listen to any new doctrines, and unwilling to be convinced that all this paper wealth is useless. This was not the case, however, with Mao-dong Ah-m. As soon as she heard of the love of the Saviour and the way of salvation through him, her heart seemed opened, as was Lydia's when St. Paul preached to her, to receive the gospel. She was soon convinced of the truth of Christianity, and determined to reject every other dependence and trust in Christ alone. She now looked upon her safe full of papers as so much worthless trash, and determined that it should be immediately destroyed. No more conclusive evidence could have been given of the sincerity of her belief in Christianity. Her neighbours expostulated with her. They said it

was a great pity recklessly to throw away what she had laboured for for a lifetime. When they found that her mind was fully made up, they insisted that if she did not wish these bills herself, she should give them to others who would value them. This she refused to do, as she said that they should never be the means of deceiving others as they had her; and in the presence of many of the villagers all the papers were burned to ashes. As she was almost blind, she asked her son to be present, and see that not one bill should be overlooked or appropriated by others.

On one of my visits to San-poh it was expected that Mao-dong Ah-m would be received into the church. She came to me, however, with this

story. Said she, "I wish you to defer my baptism till you come again, for a few days ago I committed a great fault, for which I am very sorry. I met with several of my old friends and companions coming home from the temple, where they had been worshipping, and, as I felt kindly toward them, I said, 'Yes you are engaged in a good work; you too are preparing for a future world!' I did not think what I was saying at the time, but I know I did wrong. I countenanced and encouraged them in believing and practicing idolatry. I should have spoken to them of Christ and of the better way." Agreeably to her request, her baptism was deferred till I should come again. But before my next visit she had been called

away from earth, to be, as I trust, with Christ.

A few more persons were added to the Church in Siao-gyiao-deo, but as there were more inquirers in a village a few miles distant, called Pah-z-gyiao, Zia Sin-sang removed to that place, where he established himself in another hired house. This small village contains about the same number of inhabitants as Siao-gyiao-deo—I should think from six to eight hundred. It derives its name also from one of its bridges, on which you may read, in large characters, PAH-Z-GYIAO, "Eight-Letter Bridge," or the bridge which looks like the letter eight. In this place, too, a prophet's chamber was assigned to me in the upper story. It was the best un-

occupied room the house afforded, but was sometimes so full of smoke when they were cooking below that I could hardly keep my eyes open.

Among the inquirers there, were two brothers from a neighbouring village belonging to the Zi family. The given name of the older one, who was by trade a sharpener of millstones, was Ching-üong. The name of the other, who was a tailor, was Ching-lin. I remember very well their examination as candidates for baptism. The tailor, Ching-lin, was so hesitating and unsatisfactory in his replies that I would hardly have been willing to share in the responsibility of receiving him into the Church, had it not been for the testimony of the natives, who were much better acquainted with him

than I was. I learned afterward that his hesitating manner arose from natural diffidence and partial deafness. I felt very anxious about Ching-lin on two accounts. He had no shop, but went from house to house and family to family, as he could find employment. It was feared that his old patrons would cast him off, on account of his being a Christian and ceasing from work every seventh day, thus leaving him without the means of supporting his family. There was still another cause of anxiety. Tailors in China are remarkable for a custom which is almost if not quite universal, called *Loh pu*—"take off from the cloth." Their wages are so low that it is said that they could not live without purloining a little. Ching-

lin knew very well before he united with the Church what the Bible requires as regards the observance of the Sabbath and strict honesty and truthfulness. Time could alone determine whether he would resist the temptations to which he was exposed and preserve his Christian integrity. We were delighted to find in the course of a few months that his business was increasing, rather than diminishing, and that he had proved in his own experience that "godliness is profitable in all things, having the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come." Those who employed him found that he could make a garment out of a smaller pattern than other tailors could, and that his word could be depended upon.

It was well known that he always observed the Sabbath, and when he made his engagements it was generally understood when the *Li-pa nyih*, or "worship day," would occur. His business was for the most part in wealthy heathen families. He was often asked by his employers to *Kong dao li*—"talk the doctrine." Thus, like the disciples in early times, Ching-lin went everywhere preaching the word. What he may have accomplished in other places I cannot tell, but his faithful efforts in his own family were soon followed by the happiest results. It was not long before he brought his wife and his mother with him to the chapel, and they both became regular and devout worshippers.

Another of the converts of the vil-

lage originally belonged to the *Wu wei kiao*, or "Do-nothing religion," described in the first chapter. His name is Kæ-fong. He worked at a number of different trades, all of which required him to go about from house to house. He was an earnest and intelligent man, and everywhere exerted a decided influence for good.

In the course of a few months the fish-peddler, Yia-læ, reported a man living near the city of Fu-San in the little village Yih-kô, "the Yih family," with whom he had had several conversations relating to Christianity, and who was diligently studying Christian books. He belonged to the Yih family, which gave its name to the village—was in very good circumstances, much respected, and the

teacher of the village school. This man became a decided Christian, is now an elder in our church and an earnest and efficient preacher. His village has become one of our out-stations, and the chapel or room for worship is in his house.

In the mean time, converts whom I need not mention particularly were added in other places, and those who were received at first were constantly increasing in knowledge and influence.

In the autumn of 1858 my old friend Nyün-pang visited Ningpo and stopped several days at my house. While there a rather amusing incident occurred, which I will relate. Mr. Gamble, the superintendent of our press, had lately arrived from New

York, and was living with us. He occupied as a study a room on the lower floor, one door of which opened into a back yard, in which were a number of tall shade trees. We had heard of thieves visiting other places in the neighbourhood, and were on the alert to watch for them in case they should come to our house. One evening between eight and nine o'clock, as Mr. Gamble suddenly opened his door, his feet struck some object on the door-sill. Stooping down immediately, he found a man crouching below him. Seizing him by the queue he led him through his room into the court, and bringing him before the lamp which was burning there, he recognized the smiling face of our guest Nyün-pang. Mr. Gamble not

having learned the language, they could not communicate with each other. The scene ended by his letting go of Nyün-pang's queue, grasping his hand, and giving him a fraternal shake, while both burst out into a hearty laugh. When I went the next time to San-poh, I asked Nyün-pang how this encounter between him and Mr. Gamble happened. Said he, "I was very tired that night and wished to retire to rest. It was too early for evening prayers, as the servants had not finished their work. So I was looking about for a quiet place to say my prayers by myself. Walking in the back yard under the trees, I thought to myself, This place is like the one where Jesus saw Nathaniel under the fig tree, and I had just

kneeled down on the steps in the recess of the door when Mr. Gamble opened it."

On the 3d of December, 1860, Nyün-pang fell asleep in Jesus. The little shop by the bridge was left tenantless, while angels carried another sanctified spirit to its place in the mansions of heaven. Another sheaf fully ripe was gathered into the garner of our Lord, a part of the first fruits of San-poh. No idolatrous rites solemnized his funeral, no noisy procession followed his body to its last resting-place. A few Christian men silently conveyed him to his burial, and loving hands laid him in his simple and lonely grave.

Nyün-pang's son and his son's wife, notwithstanding the example and ex-

hortations of their father, and their professions at one time of respect for and belief in Christianity, gave themselves up to the idolatry and superstition of their people. A few months after their father's death, the wife visited a female "medium" who professed to communicate with the spirits of the departed, in order to gain tidings of the state of her father-in-law's soul. The response was, that Nyün-pang, in consequence of his having renounced the religion of his ancestors, and adopted that of foreigners, was denied entrance into the ancestral temple and participation in the sacrifices which were there offered, and was wandering about a poor houseless, homeless, starving ghost!

Nyün-pang was taken away from

the evil to come. Not long after his death, the Tai-ping rebels invaded the eastern part of the Chekiang province, and their progress was everywhere marked by desolated fields, burned villages and the wanton destruction of human life. Most of our out-stations were visited, and many of our native Christians suffered much. One of the elders, Yi Loh-ding, and the school teacher at Siao-gyiao-deo, Dzing Sin-sang, were carried away as captives and have not been heard of since. It is most probable that they have perished from want or violence. Yih Sin-sang was attacked and badly wounded, and left on the ground as dead, but he recovered, and is still labouring at his post at Yih-kô. The tailor, Zi Ching-lin, was also captured,

and obliged to follow the rebel army to the city of Yü-yiao. There they learned that he was a good tailor, and offered to give him a prominent and lucrative position. In plundering shops and the residences of men of wealth they had possessed themselves of a great deal of booty, including large quantities of silk and satin. These goods they made up into rich and gaudy garments, not only for their officers, but even for the boys who followed the army, some of whom surpassed the men in their propensity to rob and murder. Ching-lin was required to take the charge of a company of tailors, and cut out and superintend their work, a large quantity of costly material being placed in his hands. He informed

his captors that he was willing to work, but was a Christian and always observed every seventh day as a day of rest, to be devoted to religious purposes. They told him that there would be no difficulty about that, as they were also Christians and observed the Sabbath. It is true that they had learned and adopted a form of Christianity, though a very corrupt one, and did observe every seventh day as a Sabbath. Ching-lin told them, however, that their Sabbath did not correspond with his, as it occurred on our Saturday. They were very angry at him for being, as they said, so "impertinent and self-willed," and threatened to kill him. But when they found that he would only do their work on his own terms, they yielded entirely to his

wishes, and he was allowed to observe his own Sabbath in his own way. In the course of a few weeks or months the rebels were driven out of the city by Imperialist soldiers, their booty was left behind and their captives escaped. Ching-lin returned to his native village dressed in the same homespun cotton suit in which he was captured, and having in his possession not a single remembrance of the trying scenes through which he had passed.

Zia Sin-sang was in Ningpo at this time, and was also captured by the rebels, as were several other native Christians there. They were, however, with a good deal of trouble and personal risk, sought out by the foreign missionaries, and through their

influence released and allowed to return to their homes.

Notwithstanding the confusion and distress consequent upon the Tai-ping invasion, and the partial suspension for a time of missionary labour in San-poh, the number of converts and inquirers gradually increased, and the influence of the native church extended to more distant villages.

Among the most important offshoots from the San-poh station is the one at the city of Yü-yiao, about twenty miles from the village of Siao-gyiao-deo, and that much nearer to Ningpo. The first convert from that place was a native physician, who was received into the Church at Siao-gyiao-deo not long after the establishment of our station there. Some time after-

ward, a carpenter from Yu-yiao was baptized, and through his influence a man named Zi Da-ching, a prisoner in the city prison was converted to Christianity. Da-ching, as we familiarly called him, was imprisoned from no fault of his own, but in the place of another man who was the real culprit, and paid to Da-ching's family a considerable sum of money to induce him to become a substitute. On account of the character which he acquired in the prison, he was made a kind of inferior officer in it. The carpenter Dzing being frequently employed in this place to do work, had an opportunity of conversing with those confined there, and many became interested listeners, but Da-ching alone made an open profession of his faith

and united with the Church. As he was never allowed to leave the prison, he was baptized within its walls, several of the native Christians being present. When the rebels took the city, all the prisoners were released. Da-ching married and settled in one of the villages of San-poh called Mô-in-deo, where he sustained the character of an earnest Christian. His village has become another out-station.

In 1863, one of our native preachers Kying Ling-yiu, was sent to the city of Yü-yiao to labour there, and endeavour to build up another station in connection with the four native Christians in that place who were then members of the San-poh church. This young evangelist was educated

in the boys' boarding-school. He was a man full of zeal and energy, familiarly acquainted with the Scriptures, an eloquent speaker and apt to teach. He was assisted by his wife, who was trained in the girls' boarding-school, and was a true helpmeet in his work. During the first year of their labours there nearly forty hopeful converts were added to the Church. In 1864, just before leaving China for a visit to the United States I visited this station, and spent several days there in company with Mr. Dodd. We saw abundant evidence of the devotion, discretion and executive ability of the native labourers, and of the vital piety of the converts, and vigorous and healthy growth of the native church. We arrived on Friday.

The following Sunday fifteen persons—ten women and five men—were received into the Church by baptism and sat down with us at the Lord's table. It was truly one of the pleasantest Sabbaths that I have ever known. The next year nearly the same number of converts were added to the Church as during the previous one. We were anticipating from this young native preacher a long course of increasing usefulness, when we learned that he and his wife and mother had within a few days been called to their rest.

In 1864 the San-poh church was divided, and the separate church of Yü-yiao constituted. The growth of these native churches was not without many trials and discouragements, and backslidings and defections of some

of the native Christians. The first convert at Yü-yiao, the physician to whom I have referred, openly denied the faith and opposed the gospel which he had professed for years. Some grew cold and indifferent, others fell into temptation, thus affording occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, and giving much care and anxiety to the native pastors and foreign missionaries. All the native Christians met with more or less opposition and persecution. Some of them, as they left their homes every Sunday morning to attend the public service in the chapel, were followed by the scoffs and curses of those nearest and dearest to them in their own families. The native preachers were often reproached by their countrymen as teaching

corrupt doctrines and misleading the people. There are few of them who have not suffered violence from the hands of those who hate them and the religion which they teach. In one of his visits to a neighbouring village in San-poh, Zia was violently attacked and in danger of being killed. Notwithstanding this opposition, the native converts increased in numbers, in intelligence and in steadfastness. I cannot better give an accurate view of the character of our native labourers and church members, and the gradual extension of our work in the out-stations, than by referring to letters which I have received from Zia Sin-sang while in the United States, translations of which will be found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

LETTERS OF MR. ZIA FROM SAN-POH.

THE following note from Zia Sin-sang is an acknowledgment of a photographic likeness which I sent him, and was intended to reach me before I sailed. It is dated July, 1864. The translation of this letter, as well as that of the one which follows it, though as literal as possible, but imperfectly conveys the beauty and delicate shades of meaning of the original. Neither Zia Sin-sang nor any of our native preachers are acquainted with our language.

“Your younger brother in the religion respectfully addresses his pastor Nevius. May you be peaceful and happy. Yesterday I was delighted to receive the likeness which you have presented to me. In it I imagine that I can almost see you face to face. I thank you most heartily. Now I have nothing beautiful to send you in return, and can only by means of this letter give a slight expression of the gratitude of my heart. Alas! you are about to leave our country? I, having through the favour of the true God, been privileged to be a disciple of Jesus, am not only indebted to the grace of God, but also owe a debt of love to my several foreign teachers, which it is difficult for me to express in words. I only pray that you and

Mrs. Nevius, and Mrs. Rankin and her two daughters, may enjoy to its very end a peaceful journey. As to the matter of my praying for you, I will not be so remiss as to forget it. As to your praying for us, it is hardly necessary for me to remind and urge you. May I trouble you to carry my Christian salutations to the teachers, pastors and Christian brethren in the great congregation in the West. With the news respecting the four churches of Ningpo I suppose you are already acquainted, and I will not trouble you with a repetition. Hereafter I will report fully what may happen to us in San-poh. I will not weary you with useless words, but only give expression again to my thanks, and the earnest wish that the kingdom of God

may quickly come, and that we may together enjoy peace and happiness. I take the liberty of naming the one hundred and twenty-first Psalm, hoping that you and your company may be comforted in reading it by the way, and that you may receive grace, mercy and peace from the heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The following letter, written from San-poh, bears date 1867—American reckoning, second month, fourteenth day: Chinese reckoning, first month, tenth day:

"In this letter I respectfully address my beloved pastor Nevius, wishing you peace and happiness. Last month I received your letter; opening and reading it, my heart was rejoiced. I

much regret that Mrs. Nevius' health is not yet entirely restored. What pleases me most is, that it is still your desire and purpose to return to the Middle Kingdom. I pray that you may receive the favour and blessing of our heavenly Father, so that we too may be blessed through you.

“It would be impossible, within the limits of a letter to describe all that has transpired since you left us. I can only refer in general to the state of the churches under the care of the Ningpo Presbytery. We have now six—viz., Ningpo, Bao-kô-fah, San-poh, Yü-yiao, Zông-yü and Hang-chow. Owing to the favour and protection of God, they are all, on the whole, in a peaceful and prosperous condition. Special news of other places I need not

write, as I suppose such news has already been communicated to you by others. I will give you an account of our affairs in San-poh somewhat in detail.

“The Lord’s Supper is now celebrated in rotation in the seven villages within the bounds of the San-poh church which you designated—viz., Mô-in-deo, Dziang-‘o-z, Fu-san, Pah-z-gyiao, S-yüing-pu, ‘Ong-we and Siao-gyiao-deo. Several other villages have been added to the list of those which contain Christians. The number of adult members of this church is now eighty. In the third month of each year all of them assemble from the different localities, in Nu-san, for worship and conference. This meeting attracts many who are not members of the

church and excites much interest among all classes.*

“Among our church members there are about eight who are weak (staggering, halting). Of those who are active and earnest, and delight in studying and preaching the gospel, there are about seven persons—viz., Ching-nong, Ching-lin, Siao-pao, Kæ-fong, Nong-kien, Chang-wai and Chao-yung. The rest are on the ordinary level, but most of them are able to read in the Roman character.†

* These native Christians belong to not less than fifteen different villages scattered over a district of country from twelve to fifteen miles in diameter. As it is impossible for them all to meet every Sunday in the same place, different centres or out-stations are appointed in the several neighbourhoods, each of which will, we trust, at no distant period have its separate church.

† The written language or language of books is very different from the spoken one, which has no literature and

“Those who have the charge of the church are as formerly Zia Ying-tong,* Yih Sin-sang and Lo Sih-peng. Ping-ün† is teaching school in the village of Dziang-o-z. We propose this

is not reduced to writing. Of this book-language, which is represented by characters or letters such as are seen on the China tea-chests and other articles imported from China, the people are generally ignorant. As most of our native Christians cannot read this difficult book-language, the missionaries have reduced the spoken language to writing, representing it by the same Roman characters which we use. In this Romanized vernacular, we have in Ningpo an excellent translation of the New Testament and parts of the Old, a hymn-book, and a number of other Christian books. This is the literature referred to in this letter. Mr. Zia states the fact that most of the “ordinary-level” Christians have learned to read it, in order to show that they have more zeal and love for Christianity than we might suppose, judging from the name by which he designates them.

* This is the writer of this letter. He was ordained and installed a pastor of the San-poh church in 1864.

† This is one of the boys who went with me from San-poh in 1857 to enter the Ningpo boarding-school.

year to elect and ordain Ching-nong as an additional elder. We also wish to elect deacons.

“My son Ah-loh is this year studying in the school at Kông poh-ngen.* The other members of my family are well: you need not be anxious about us.

“I will frankly inform you about my studies. Besides the Bible, the books which I have studied principally, are those which were prepared by you. I have made a note in the margin of the ‘Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles’† of its typographical errors. There are in all a few tens of them. I cannot long remember what

* The name of the place in Ningpo where the boarding-school was established.

† This is a book which I left in manuscript, and was printed a short time before the writing of this letter.

I study. I am certainly too careless and indolent.

“I am a man who is but an ignorant sinner. When I think of the weighty responsibilities which have been devolved upon me, and of the peace and prosperity which have been vouchsafed to the Church, it seems that our blessings must be in answer to the prayers of yourself, Miss Aldersey and others. May I again beg you never to forget San-poh ?

“Several days since, when I was in Fu-san, four persons were received into the Church. In the presence of all the brethren I communicated your Christian salutation.* I also read a part of your letter, and discoursed upon it. Afterward, Ching-nong said,

* Literally, “Ask peace.”

‘Will you thank the teacher, and also send him our salutations?’ The forty or fifty persons in the chapel all expressed the wish that you might quickly return, and that they might again see you. In a word, they seemed very much pleased.

“Contrary to our expectations, within the last four or five years several of us in Ningpo have been ordained as preachers, pastors and evangelists. It is to be regretted that we are all humble* men. It is my opinion that we will soon have one preacher superior to us—viz., Chang vông-kweng.† May I ask you when you pray for us not to forget *him*? In the ex-

* Literally, “coarse.”

† A young man who is a graduate of the boarding-school.

aminations of candidates before the Presbytery his careful preparation was most evident. He is particularly familiar with the 'Compendium of Theology.' His wife Ah-yüing* has already gone to heaven. Her zeal and piety knew no change or fluctuation. She was certainly a person to be respected and loved.

"Dzing Shih-nyiao† is now in the employ of the mission, and is preaching in Wu-tsiu.‡ There are in that place seven or eight persons who have already united with the Church. This

* Formerly a pupil of the girls' boarding-school. She had a bright intellect, and was a fine scholar and an earnest Christian. She died of consumption.

† This is Zia's old friend, through whom he first heard of Christianity.

‡ A city about one hundred and forty miles in the interior.

is good news, which I know you will be delighted to hear. Yih Sin-sang and Sih-peng say that they will not write at present, and wish to send their salutations through me. My opportunities and abilities to write are insufficient to satisfy my wishes. Hereafter I will not write you again. My best wishes to Mrs. Nevius. Will you give my salutations to the fellow-Christians with whom you are associated?

“Your younger brother in Christ,

“ZIA YING-TONG.”

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

THE previous chapters of this book were written in the United States during the summer of 1868, just before leaving for China. I am now writing (February, 1869) at my old home in Ningpo. I returned a day or two since from a visit to San-poh, in company with Rev. Mr. Leyenberger. We started in a boat precisely like the one described in the first chapter, and with the son of a boatman whom I often employed years ago. He reminded me of a visit which I formerly paid to

his family when he was a boy, which visit he remembers very distinctly. His father was at that time almost persuaded to become a Christian, and invited me to go to his village to preach to his people. I am sorry to say that he shrank back from the trials of a Christian life and died an idolater.

In passing up the rivers every object was familiar, and brought up many old associations. It was pleasant to look again upon the outstretched plain, and its villages and the hills in the distance, and to hear the shouts of the men at the *mud-slide* as they pulled us up from the head waters of the river into the canal above. We reached Mr. Zia's home late at night, and did not go on shore till the next morning.

We found that we had arrived in a time of affliction, and that the first office of friendship was that of giving expression to our sympathy. Mr. Zia's little daughter had died but a few days before. She was the pet of his family, and, as he said, the prettiest and loveliest of his children. He seemed to take a sad pleasure in talking of the sleepless nights which he spent watching with her, and vainly endeavouring to alleviate her sufferings. He spoke also of the great profit he had derived during those painful hours in the school of affliction in thinking upon the mysterious ways of God, and gaining a glimpse through the portal of death of that "happy land" where the weary and heavy laden shall be for ever at rest,

“there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying.”

We found Zia the same unpretentious, frank and conscientious man that he was in former years. I believe there is but one opinion in the minds of all who know him, whether natives or foreigners, as to his Christian character and devotion to his work.

The condition of the Church is very similar to that described in Zia's letter in the previous chapter. Some of the native Christians give decided evidence of growth in knowledge, zeal and stability of character: others, though without reproach, are also without zeal, and a few are wavering or yielding to temptation, and relapsing into idolatry. Strife and dissensions have also arisen, producing

personal estrangement of brethren, but there is reason to hope that no serious or permanent injury to the Church will ensue.

Zi Ching-lin, the tailor, is successfully prosecuting his business, beloved by all the members of the church, and respected by all who know him. His brother, Zi Ching-yüong, is now an elder in the Church. The fish-peddler has been improving rapidly in a knowledge of books and Christianity, and several years ago was elected an elder of the church, taken under the care of the Presbytery as a candidate for licensure, and into the employ of the mission as a native assistant. But some months since, on account of a serious quarrel with his wife, in which he used abusive and unbecoming lan-

guage, he was suspended from church communion and from the exercise of the functions of his office as elder. He was also dismissed from mission employ. His wife was suspended from communion with the church at the same time. Both of them have acknowledged their fault, and profess penitence and a determination to live in all things in accordance with their duty as Christians. They have not yet been restored to their former position in the church. I refer to this case to show that the native pastors and sessions, and the Presbytery, are not lax in the administering of discipline. Irregularities, requiring exhortation, reproof and church discipline, are constantly arising, which call for the exercise of a great deal of

care, prudence and faithfulness. I doubt whether such cases as the one here referred to would be taken cognizance of in many of our churches at home. There is very little difference of opinion with regard to it here.

At a recent meeting of the Presbytery, the San-poh church was divided into the East and West San-poh churches, Mr. Zia continuing to be the pastor of the East church, and having the supervision of the other, until a suitable native pastor can be procured. The present number of Christians in these two churches combined is about one hundred. This does not include the Yü-yiao church, which numbers more than one hundred. Every year gives evidence of progress and enlargement, though not

in that degree which we could wish. I do not know of one of the San-poh church members who receives any pecuniary aid from the mission, except one or two who are employed as native assistants or catechists. Contributions are made for benevolent purposes, in all the out-stations, and it is the intention of the church to increase these contributions so as to furnish the greater part of the pastor's salary.

The number of the converts in a few of the out-stations is increasing rapidly, while that in others is much diminished by death and defection. Earnest women of simple faith and patient endurance under trials are among the principal supporters of several of these out-stations.

The manner in which weak and

imperfectly-instructed Christians who reside at a distance from the pastor are tempted to doubt, and are sometimes drawn back to idolatry, may be illustrated by a case which occurred a few weeks ago. In the village of Mô-in-deo, the following rumour, originating with some ill-disposed person, has created much excitement and suspicion: It is said that some one has at last discovered the reason why we are so zealous in making converts—viz., that we collect and possess ourselves of the spirits of all our converts when they die, and send them back to the United States in large baskets, where they are employed in keeping in motion the wheels and superintending the work of our cotton factories. The employment of this spiritual

slave-labour is referred to as the reason why foreign cotton cloth is so cheap. A young man, who is a violent opposer of Christianity, has succeeded, by making use of this current rumour, in so filling the mind of his mother, who lately became a Christian, with doubts and fears that she has renounced her faith.

I was much pleased with our visit at Dziang'-o-z, a large village in the western part of the San-poh plain, near the sea. Here we had made an appointment to meet several native Christians, whom I was not able for want of time to visit at their homes. In consequence of the constant and heavy rains, nearly all who did not reside in the village were not able to be present. The little chapel, how-

ever, was full, the company including all the Christians in the neighbourhood, about twenty, and many of the neighbours, who were attracted by curiosity. A considerable time was spent in familiar conversation, in which all took part. Idolatrous worship and sacrifices to gods and spirits were freely discussed. Then all took their seats quietly, the men removed their hats, and the whole company assumed the appearance of respectful and interested worshippers, while we joined in singing and prayer and attending to the teachings of God's word.

Nearly all the native Christians here are farmers. They are poor, but above want. The men work in the fields during the summer, and spend

most of the time in the winter in braiding straw-hats for the market. In this way they earn from four to ten cents in a day. The women, in addition to cooking and taking care of their houses, employ their leisure-time in spinning cotton and weaving. They are simple-minded country-people, but they are able to give an intelligent reason for the hope that is in them. They often speak to their neighbours of the truths of Christianity, and, what is better, they illustrate these truths in an encouraging measure in their lives.

Near this village is a very large and crowded town called Tsiu-ông, where a little more than a year ago there was not a single Christian, but there are now near twenty. A devout and

earnest woman, who had grace to suffer much persecution and trial for the sake of Christ, has been one of the principal agents made use of in commencing the work here. This station is connected with the Yü-yiao church. There is now a native catechist residing there.

It is very sad in passing over this region to witness the desolations produced by the Tai-ping insurgents. Large sections of some of the villages contain nothing but ruins. Many of the inhabitants live in low, rude hovels, because they are too poor to provide themselves with anything better. They are, however, labouring industriously, and if peace continues, will before many years have passed rebuild their desolated villages.

In reviewing the history of the past twelve years in San-poh and Yü-yiao, it is difficult to estimate what has been accomplished. More than two hundred hopeful converts are now to be found in these churches. Nearly a score of believers who have witnessed a good confession have already passed from the abodes of superstition and idolatry to join the general assembly of the Church of the first born whose names are written in heaven. And are these the only results? By no means. This whole region is beginning to be pervaded with the leaven of Christianity. Thousands of men and women are familiar with the name of Jesus. Topics connected with the Christian religion are freely discussed everywhere. Some who have not yet

learned to love the Gospel are thoroughly convinced of the folly of idolatry, and are relaxing in their attention to heathen ceremonies or abstaining from them altogether. May we not hope that a preparation is being made for a general turning of this people to Christ, and will not those who love his cause pray that this desired consummation may be hastened?

CHINESE IN CALIFORNIA.

THE author, on his return to China, stopped for a few days in San Francisco. The following are his impressions of the work among the Chinese in California :

MODES OF REACHING THE CHINESE WITH THE GOSPEL.—In accompanying Mr. Loomis in one of his street-preaching excursions, I found that this part of his work was very similiar to the same kind of work in China. Many of the Chinese recognized him as an old friend, and received his salutations very respectfully and with their accustomed politeness. In a Chinese boarding-house where we stopped for

some time, Mr. Loomis and a native Christian talked to a group of the inmates; the keeper of the house was evidently much annoyed, and after a time gave free expression to his feelings in language like the following: "This place was not opened for preaching. You have a chapel, why not stay there rather than come here to interfere with our business?"

On Sunday afternoon and evening Mr. Loomis has a Sunday-school, about one hundred persons, old and young being present. Ladies and gentleman from different churches in the city come in to take classes. As none of these volunteer teachers understand the Chinese language, and but few of the Chinese are acquainted with ours, the time is occupied chiefly in

teaching English by the use of Scripture cards and primary reading-books. A desire to learn to speak and read English is the principal motive which attracts the Chinese to this school, and a considerable proportion of them leave when religious exercises, which follow in Chinese, commence.

WHAT GOOD HAS BEEN DONE?—But to return to the ever-recurring question, “What good has been done?” First of all, there is here a little church established. It contains less than a score of members, it is true, but they are intelligent, growing Christians. They not only support themselves, but are glad to do what they can to help others. Several hopefully-converted persons have returned to China, some of whom are studying to prepare

themselves to preach the Gospel to their countrymen. And is this all that has been accomplished? By no means. We have great reason to be thankful that those immigrants do not leave our shores without some palpable evidence that we care for their souls, and without one effort at least for their spiritual benefit. We may the better appreciate what has been accomplished by imagining what would have been the condition and the feelings of this people if our mission had not been established among them. Many of them have found in the missionary their true and perhaps only friend from among our people. In visiting the eight hundred Chinese who are returning to their homes on the ship on which I am now writing,

I have been delighted to find that a large proportion of them are familiar with our chapel, know more or less what is taught there, and regard with the greatest respect the missionary. When they saw me coming among them with a selection of tracts in my hands, they almost uniformly exclaimed (though I was an entire stranger to them), "Here is a man who talks Jesus."

Eternity alone will disclose the results of the efforts which have already been put forth in this mission. Still, very little has been attempted, in comparison to what the Church might and ought to do.