

I cannot insist too strongly on the necessity of an increased number of laborers, in order to accomplish large results at an early day. Much of the success in Japan is due to the fact that missionaries are there in such force as to deeply impress the minds of the people, while China has not one missionary, either male or female, to a million of her population. Where the largest results have been secured is down about Foochow and Amoy, where the laborers are most numerous. At first they waited from ten to fifteen years for a single convert. Now there are several thousand native Christians in the immediate vicinity of these two cities. The watchmen on the mountain tops are so near to each other that they can see eye to eye. You can go nowhere near either city without finding foot-prints of missionaries, and most frequently their dwellings, announcing that Christianity has made its home in the country as well as in the city. With a dozen faithful men in one mission here in this province we should be able to do large things for the Master. We must not expect one or two men to do any thing at once. The leaven in small quantities takes longer to leaven the whole lump. The Sandwich Islanders, fifty thousand in number, were Christianized by the labors of twenty missionaries at once. Bishop Marvin is persuaded that we cannot afford to enter Japan, but that we should concentrate all our missionaries in this part of the world on our field in China. It is the Church's last great campaign, the taking of China in the name of Christ. That accomplished, the work of the world's redemption will be completed. The conversion of the four hundred millions of China, fully one-third of the human race, demands the united energies of the Church of Christ. Happy are we of the Methodist Church, South, in sharing in this work.

Shanghai, China, Dec. 25, 1876.

LETTER XIV.

TRIP TO SOOCHOW AND HANGCHOW.

THE Chinese have this saying, to express their admiration of these two great cities, "Above is heaven—below are Soochow and Hangchow." They are both Fu cities, which rank next to Kiung cities, like Peking and Nankin. Next to Fu cities are Shien cities, of which Shanghai is one. The almost universal mode of travel in this part of China is by water. The whole country is intersected by a net-work of canals, fed for the most part by water from the Great Lake. These canals are full of choice fish, and help to solve the important question of means of subsistence as well as transit.

On the evening of December 26 our fleet of three house-boats, commanded respectively by Superintendent Lambuth, Mandarin Allen, and Expectant Parker, each manned by four or five boatmen, slipped their moorings near the mouth of Soochow Creek, in Shanghai, and moved westward into the interior. The three Missourians were together, and the hitherto unchristened boat received the fitting name, "Missouri." She is less than thirty feet long and eight feet wide, and is divided into two rooms, one twelve and the other six feet long, with a common height of six feet. The contents are three beds, two tables, a stove, a clock, several chairs, book-shelves, wash-stand, mirror, and other things

necessary to a well-furnished house. We have a large supply of Chinese books and tracts on board for distribution and sale at different points along our route. We are propelled by "sculling," several men working a single oar at the stern of the boat, or by "tracking," men on the tow-path pulling the boat by means of a rope, or by a well-filled sail, which increases our speed to six miles an hour. The canals for the most part are quite fine, especially the Grand Canal, connecting Soochow and Hangchow, which for miles is well walled, and is generally wide and of good depth.

On the morning of the 27th we reached the village of Wongdoo, about twenty-four miles from Shanghai. Here is located a Chinese camp in connection with a small fort. Several hundred soldiers were drilling as we approached. About half carried muskets, and the other half were spearmen, with their long antiquated spears. Very little discipline seemed to prevail among them as they straggled back to the fort. We had scarcely dropped anchor when our boats were surrounded by crowds of the natives, eager to see the "red-headed" foreigners (for all Chinese have black hair), or to buy books.

Here began my first missionary experience. Armed, like all the others, with a package of tracts against idolatry, and taught to say *liangdi*, or "two-cash," I had no difficulty in selling a large number. These are published by the Presbyterian Mission Press, in Shanghai, and are furnished to all missionaries, who sell them at a nominal price and return the proceeds to the Press. It is deemed best to sell them, for a number of reasons. To give them away is to have such a crowd of applicants as really to endanger life, so that to sell is the only way in which to maintain any thing like order in the surging mass about you. The people are eager to buy, showing that they appreciate them, and desire to read and

preserve them. Then, the price asked is so small (twelve cash making one cent) that the poorest may buy without difficulty. There is never any occasion to ask any one to buy, for you have more purchasers than you can accommodate. The people will run after you, asking to buy, and very often on the streets the missionary is addressed, "Sie-sang (elder-born), have you any small books to sell?" This, to my mind (so is every one apt to magnify his own work), is one of the most hopeful features about missionary work in China. The Chinese are a reading people, and among the books that thus find their way into their homes are the different books of the Bible, which are sold for about one cent a copy. Thus is the seed of the kingdom being sown in China.

At Wongdoo we have a rented chapel, where we went, followed by a crowd of Chinese. Our native preacher at Naziang, Brother Fong, preaches here, and he had walked over from his home, some six miles distant, to meet us at the chapel. Brothers Lambuth and Allen addressed the people, who immediately filled the chapel, telling them the object of our visit, and rehearsing the story of Christ's love. After the service came the demand for more books, which continued until we reached our boats, where, during our absence, the two little sons of the missionaries had sold quite a number. Bishop Marvin became, during the day, quite an enthusiastic colporteur, and would bring back a fine string of cash as the result of his sales. His favorite book was the Gospel of John, of which he sold a number of copies. Many were anxious also to buy Genesis, to learn about the creation of the world.

In the afternoon we reached Naziang, where we have a chapel, built by two brothers in Mississippi, a boys' school and a girls' school, with a native parsonage. The two teachers in these schools

were those who walked to Shanghai to attend the service on ordination Sabbath. Brother Dsau preached in the chapel to a crowded but rather noisy audience. The people of China are so in the habit of coming and going as they please, that though, as a rule, they are quiet and attentive while in the chapel, they do not generally remain through the service, and hence their going creates more or less disturbance. They do not apparently mean any disrespect, but are simply following their old customs. The converts, of course, are different, but to keep order among the heathen one of the missionaries usually has to be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, alike to seat the people and to keep outsiders from crowding in when there is no longer room, and to prevent them from talking.

We spent the night at Naziang, quietly sleeping in our boats in the canal, which runs through the town. In the morning several score of the fifteen thousand people of the place gathered around our boats, eager to see the foreigners eat. Their interested look as they peeped in at the windows was quite amusing. During all this absence, wherever we have gone in any city or village we have been followed by a crowd of the natives. Never did Chinamen excite more interest in an inland town of America than we do all through the interior. We have not seen a single foreign house, save at Hangchow, since leaving Shanghai. After visiting the boys' school and the girls' school, and hearing them recite, we looked in at one or two Buddhist temples, and resumed our boats.

Karding, where we next stopped, is a walled city, but with only about five thousand souls. The insurgents, during the Tae-ping rebellion, destroyed many of the houses, and the population was greatly diminished. We have a lot of ground here, but no building. Our native preacher, Brother Tsung, was

on hand in our rented chapel, and preached to the congregation that instantly assembled and filled the house. Here, as elsewhere, there was a great demand for small books, of which we sold a large number.

While passing through the streets we noticed several ceremonies connected with the burial and future happiness of the dead. A band of minstrels were playing outside of a house that was filled with people, many of whom wore white, as the badge of mourning. The father had recently died, and elaborate burial ceremonies were being performed, of which wailing and lively music seemed to form the larger part. The same style of music, only accompanied by the occasional tap of the drum and beating of the cymbal, attracted us to a Tauist temple, where a soul was being prayed out of purgatory. Elaborately embroidered curtains hung all around the front of the altar, before which three priests were performing their gyrations with the easy motion of a dancing-master. They were clad in robes embroidered with dragons and other animals. The principal priest, with a sort of tablet in his hand, prayed toward the different points of the compass, after he had first held the tablet close to his face and made peculiar motions of the head, as if writing on it with his nose. The brother of the deceased man, a fine-looking man in middle life, had a seat near the altar, as if to see that the priests did their work well. This was the third and last day of the ceremonies, and the deceased man was supposed to be out of purgatory and well advanced on his way to heaven.

The utmost confusion prevailed during all these ceremonies, which were quite impressive. The people would walk unrebuked among the priests while going through the service, and one of the priests, having finished his part, went to the altar and lit his

pipe and quietly looked on, smoking during the continuance of the worship. Buddhism and Taoism are so nearly alike that the oldest missionaries are able to state only minor differences between them. Many of the people, in their desire to be on the safe side, worship the idols of both. Brother Tsau, the native preacher here, accompanied us to our boats, and his parting injunction was the one common among the Chinese, "Walk well," or "Take heed to your steps."

The next morning, by the help of well-filled sails, we reached Kwunshan, a walled city, which derives its name from a "high mountain" that stands within the walls, and is the only one visible for thirty miles. It is surmounted by a pagoda, solidly built. The whole is perhaps a thousand feet high, and is visible from Soochow, twenty-four miles distant. We passed through the city and ascended this hill, covered with the ruins of temples, and in a cave near the top we found the broken heads and limbs of many idols, demolished by the iconoclastic insurgents, but carefully gathered up and placed here by the deluded people. The view from the summit was quite a fine one without the city walls, where were canals and lakes in every direction, now white with sails, but within the city immense unoccupied spaces showed the great desolation wrought during the insurrection of 1860. We walked along the walls on our way to the boats, but having occasion at length to pass through a desolated portion of the city, we saw one or more skeletons exposed in the broken vaults, and one jar of "potted ancestors," as it is called, being a jar of the bones of some one whose vault had been destroyed, but gathered up by some friendly hand and placed in this jar, which was half buried in the ground, the top covered only with a piece of broken crockery. While, of course, the graves and vaults are not so thick all through the

country as they are about Shanghai, yet we find them in considerable numbers everywhere on this trip.

With favoring breeze we reach Soochow by 9 P.M.; too late to enter the city, however, as the gates are closed and sealed at 8 P.M. We meet the native mail-boat coming down as we go up. A sort of express company, composed wholly of Chinese, carry the mail and express matter, often large sums of money, in native boats plying between Shanghai, Soochow, and Hangchow. A single boatman runs each boat, holding the rudder with his hands and working the oar with his bare feet. They run quite rapidly, making the entire distance of eighty-four miles between Soochow and Shanghai in about sixteen hours.

We were much interested in the fish-boats along this part of the canal. Fishing is largely done with cormorants, which dive after the fish from the side of the boat, where they sit in rows. To prevent their swallowing the fish they have an iron ring around the throat. The fishermen seize the fish and throw them into large baskets, and the cormorants are sent back into the water for more. Immense traps of bamboo abound, where the fish are driven and caught, to say nothing of all kinds of fish-nets.

Early in the morning we entered by one of the gates into the great city of Soochow, by far the best city I have yet seen in China. The circumference of the walls is twelve miles, and the population at one time was hardly less than a million, although now reduced to half this number. The wall is well built, and the city is entered at whatever point by three large gates, one inside the other, for additional safety. The streets are cleaner and more attractive than those of any city hitherto visited. We shortly entered a silk-weaving establishment, where we saw elaborate designs being woven into the silk. The