

weaver sat working treadles of bamboo poles, while a young woman assisted in producing the right figures by pulling cords which moved yet other treadles. We saw some women embroidering silk and satin, working with the needle and doing the most beautiful work in the same room where they cook, eat, and sleep, surrounded by dirty children. Yet the work when finished was very neat, because they kept it covered with a cloth as soon as any part was completed. Large quantities of silk are manufactured in Soochow, and much choice embroidery comes from there.

We of course ascended the large pagoda of nine stories, and obtained a splendid view of the entire city and of the country for miles around. Many pagodas were visible at different points from the top of this one. There are two standing together in one part of the city, called twin pagodas, while near by stands a third, called the Ink pagoda. After the first two were constructed it was discovered that the *fung shuey*, or luck, of the place was not good. A geomancer being called in to pronounce on the case, said that the two were like pens, but ink was lacking, and that another square-shaped pagoda must be built for ink, while a lake of water near by would serve to moisten the ink. Hereby the *fung shuey* was corrected. These two words really mean "wind and water," but by the Chinese generally they are regarded as the equivalent of luck. Visiting a large Confucian temple in the city we found it very filthy, from the presence of many pigeons, which were allowed to live in it. One of the party turned to a literary Chinaman who accompanied us and remarked how foul the place was. He replied, "But the *fung shuey* of the place is very fine." Where pigeons can be induced to inhabit is regarded a lucky place, and the temple-doors are left open for that purpose. One of the saddest sights from the

pagoda was the execution-ground, and it did not need the aid of the opera-glass to see the dark spots of blood on the ground, made by the recent beheadings which had taken place there. Nothing has disappointed me so much as these pagodas. They were once, no doubt, beautiful structures, but they look very dilapidated now. They are usually erected as memorials, but also have idols in them to whom worship is paid. Three new ones that we saw after leaving Soochow, with their fresh colors, and bells at the corners tinkling in the wind, helped to form some idea of what the large ones once were.

After leaving the pagoda we met an idol procession in one of the principal streets. The idol was about twice as large as a man, and was borne in a chair on the shoulders of men, while some went before bearing banners and beating gongs. Formerly many would have clasped their hands and bowed as it passed, but now only a few children near us were seen to be impressed by it. Yet to one of these idols, to pray for success in some enterprise, we saw a mandarin general borne in his sedan-chair, attended by several coolies and others. We visited the city temple, which is some seventy-five feet high. The court was filled with all manner of tradesmen with their wares, while the inside, save a little space in front of the idol, was wholly taken up with stands for the sale of Chinese pictures. We saw many of these everywhere in nearly every house, with candles burning before them, showing that worship was paid to them.

Soochow is a very Athens, in view of the large number of literary men who live there and in the numerous superstitions of the place. None believe these absurd superstitions more fully than the graduates. Last summer the whole city was in an uproar for several months, under the belief that the foreigners carried paper men about with them,

which being let loose would light on the people at night and crush them to death. Gongs would be beaten all night to ward them off, and the people were afraid to go to sleep. The lives of the foreigners were in peril. One of the missionaries having bought a lot of ground for a school-building, it was pronounced to be on the head of the dragon, and hence destroying the *fung shuey* of the city; whereupon the man who sold the ground was cast into prison, where he has been confined for an entire year, while the lot had to be exchanged for one in a different part of the city.

We attended service in Soochow on the Sabbath. The boys in our boarding-school showed remarkable acquaintance with the Scriptures. Groves Vaughan, Marvin and Vernon Wilson are the English names of some of these bright boys. In connection with the morning sermon by Brother Lambuth, Bishop Marvin baptized the infant son of Brother Dsau, the native preacher. We attended in the afternoon the service at the rented chapel in another part of the city, where the usual crowd was present. We own one chapel with native parsonage and school-room.

It was a special pleasure to preach at 4 P.M. to all the foreigners of Soochow, including the eight of our own company. The service was held at the house of a lady missionary, and the congregation all told numbered just fourteen persons. Bishop Marvin preached at night in the house of another missionary to the same congregation, less three persons, two children having gone to bed, and one lady remaining with the child of another to enable her to attend. Yet this Sabbath in Soochow will prove one of the most memorable of our lives. The missionaries there all live in native houses, and are the only foreigners in a city of half a million. As we entered into sympathy with them in their sacrifices

and work, over eighty miles from the nearest foreigner, we began to realize the true character of missionary work. Altogether the number of converts in Soochow is less than twenty-five, and yet their faith does not falter, for they remember the history of the work in other cities, and are content to labor on and await the harvest.

Aside from Brother Parker and Brother Dsau, of our own Church, the Presbyterian Church has Mr. Fitch, and the Southern Presbyterian Church has Mr. Dubose, Mr. Davis, and Miss Safford. A lady missionary has a very hard time in an inland city of China. So low is the place of woman among the Chinese that they cannot understand the social *status* of an unmarried woman who is intimate in the family of a married man. A single Chinese woman is rare. All are either wives or secondary wives, and so they regard all foreign women. Insulting epithets are thus hurled at lady missionaries, who, as soon as they learn the language, are greatly tried thereby. Yet the work which they can do is very great, as they have access to homes closed against all others, save the wives of missionaries. A foreign child excites great interest among the Chinese.

Soochow is full of wealthy mandarins, officials, and *expectants* (those prepared for and awaiting promotion), and their families often send for the missionary's wife to bring her child for them to see. Many an opportunity is thus found of telling about Jesus. The story is usually heard with interest, and often the way is open for subsequent calls. Until we have more lady missionaries to work among the Chinese women the number of converts among them will necessarily be small. Those who attend the public services are usually all men. Soochow is an immense city, where more laborers are needed. Brother Parker is doing good service here.

He is able to preach with considerable ease in this difficult language, and is much valued by his fellow-missionaries. I hope that we shall soon be able to reënforce them by one or more of the same spirit of devotion to his work.

It was part of our programme, if possible, to go to Kwunshan and ascend the mountain there, borne in chairs on the backs of women. This humiliating experience was spared us by a change in the wind, which promised us a speedy trip to Hangchow, provided we sailed immediately. After making good headway for an hour or two our Chinese boatmen became alarmed on account of the strong wind, and dropped anchor. We induced them to start again, but not to hoist sail, so that by the slow process of tracking and sculling it took us three days to accomplish what we could easily have done in half the time. We were on the Grand Canal all the way, and passed through a fine country. Immense groves of mulberry-trees lined the banks of the canal for miles, and reminded us that we were in the silk-producing part of China. Fine camphor-trees, some singly and some in groves, interested us very much as we saw them from the boats or in our walks along the tow-path. We passed several walled cities and many villages, in whose streets we sold tracts while the boats wended their way through the canal. Several ancient forts erected in the time of the Ming dynasty, now harmless and crumbling, looked down on us as we passed. All this section of the country is historic. Here were considerable spaces of ground desolated during the Tae-ping rebellion, and not now under cultivation.

We reached Hangchow on the morning of the 4th, and after a walk of two miles through the suburbs we entered the walled city. The total population, we were told, is about seven hundred and fifty thousand. The wall is estimated to be fifteen miles in

circumference, and, like the Great Wall of China in the North, it runs over the mountains, which are partly embraced in the city.

Under the leadership of the Southern Presbyterian missionaries, Brothers Stewart, Painter, and Helm, we were able to see the more interesting parts of the city. We first visited the Mohammedan mosque, built in their peculiar style of architecture, and one of the highest buildings in the city. They have been long established in the city (entering China many centuries ago), and number some two hundred converts, by whom all the services are conducted. The blood of an ox freshly sprinkled in the court announced a recent sacrifice. Arabic inscriptions abound, one over the outer door announcing, "The temple is for Mussulmans who travel and wish to consult the Koran." Mohammedans are found in different parts of China, and are usually the butchers, but not of hogs, which are left for others.

Within the walls of Hangchow is a walled city known as the Tartar city, occupied by a Tartar garrison and their families. The men are about like the Chinese, but the women are readily distinguished by their masculine look and by their overmuch pantaloons and short skirts. The city does not compare with Hangchow, which is really a magnificent city, of well-paved and clean streets and stores. The signs, as usual, all hang up and down, and, being gilded, present a fine appearance. It certainly surpasses any city in China that I have yet seen. Its situation is very fine, with the lake and bay on each side, and the mountains, covered with pagodas and temples, overlooking the city. From Phoenix Hill, one of these temple-covered summits, we obtained a delightful view of the surrounding country and of the neat whitewashed houses of the city at our feet. Most of the houses

of the city are built with mud-walls, which are quite handsome when plastered and whitewashed, but in many instances they were neglected and crumbling.

The most interesting place visited in Hangchow was the residence of Wu, a wealthy banker and pawnbroker. Pawnbroking is one of the largest and most profitable kinds of business in China. I have seen larger buildings devoted to this than to any other business. Wu has made an immense fortune, but has been withal so public-spirited that he is much respected by the people. He built one of the temples on Phoenix Hill, provides boxes throughout the city for the collection of the sacred character (any scraps of paper containing Chinese writing) preparatory to burning it, and inters the bones of the unburied dead. He also contributes liberally for the relief of the poor, and his services to the government have secured him special recognition and a high title from the emperor. The Chinese display at Philadelphia owes most of its interest to the thirty thousand dollars' worth of carvings, bronzes, and porcelain contributed from his private residence, which is regarded as the finest house, only excepting the imperial palace, in all the empire. Its cost, including furniture, was over a million dollars. It is near the heart of the city, and is surrounded by a wall some forty feet high, shutting it out wholly from the street.

Wu himself was absent in Shanghai, but we were kindly welcomed by the servants, of whom there are about two hundred in his employ, as well as by several of his sons. How many there are of these we do not know, but he has thirty wives in his harem, or private apartments, which, of course, we did not enter. The mere matter of providing clothing for his household requires the employment of a large number of tailors, who are seen at work

amid silks and furs as we pass to the reception hall. This hall, where we were received and served with tea, is filled with rosewood furniture, while all the tables are covered with marble. Framed marble and carved stones constitute the walls, while elegantly carved wood abounds everywhere. A number of costly clocks are placed in different parts of the room. The chandeliers are also foreign, as is the beautiful stained glass of the windows. The cost of the house is largely in the splendid carvings which are found in every room.

Opposite the reception hall, on the other side of the garden, which is completely surrounded by splendid apartments, is the library, fitted up very much like it. This is reached either by walking along the verandas which lead to it or by going through the garden. We chose this latter—passing along walks guarded by porcelain rails of different colors, up through a summer-house, glittering with beautiful lamps and overlooking the lake at its base, then through grottoes and caves of curiously-shaped rock, with here and there porcelain stools and a marble table, where, in a cool atmosphere, laden with the fragrance of flowers and the music of birds, the guests may sip their tea or play at dominoes. We also ascended to the observatory, overlooking the premises and the entire city, as well as visited the aviary, with its sacred storks, silver and golden pheasants, and mandarin ducks. All through the grounds are strangely-formed stones, resembling petrified pines, while many petrified stones are cemented together, with the skill of which the Chinese are masters, and form a sort of grotto. Despite all this splendor there was an air of overdoing at times, which was somewhat distasteful. It was, however, a great treat to see Chinese life at its best, as we had so often seen it at its worst.

It was very pleasant on visiting the Presbyte

rian compound to see mignonette and sweet alyssum in full bloom in the yard. The whole air of the place was a delightful reminder of home. It was the atmosphere of Christianity. While the whole number of converts in Hangchow does not exceed one hundred, yet considerable progress has been made in the ten years of missionary work here. When one sees the difficulties in the way the wonder is not at the small number of converts, but that there is a single one. Yet here in this great city is held every week a Sabbath-school composed mostly of Chinese pupils in the boarding-schools, which, in point of intelligent interest and acquaintance with the Scriptures, will compare favorably with any one in America. There is also held a weekly teachers'-meeting, attended by missionaries and natives, where they prepare for the duties of the Sabbath. Much good is being done by the female missionaries here, one of whom is a physician. They have ready access everywhere, and meet with none of the difficulties referred to elsewhere in this letter.

After a busy day of seeing and hearing we were each glad to take a sedan-chair to our boats, two miles distant. Leaving Hangchow at dark, our boatmen were induced, under promise of double wages, to work day and night until we should reach Shanghai. The most striking objects on the return trip, as in going, were the magnificent stone bridges over the canals, and the memorial gateways, made of upright stones with horizontal stones on top, elaborately carved and inscribed. They are erected in honor of filial piety or of the devotion of some unmarried female, or of some widow who refused to marry a second time.

Although anxious to do so we were unable to stop at Kiashin, a Fu city, where one of our native preachers offers us a lot of ground on which to build a chapel. Passing in the night the gates were closed,

and we could not enter. Although we were each provided with a passport from the Chinese officials, we have thus far gone everywhere without having occasion to show it, and we expect to reach Shanghai within twenty-four hours, without having suffered the least interruption throughout this trip of over three hundred and fifty miles and amid several millions of Chinese. We have visited each of our mission-stations, as well as looked upon the fertile and inviting field of missionary labor in this province.

Not many years ago it would have been a perilous undertaking to visit these great cities of Soochow and Hangchow, where we have gone with perfect safety. The field which we have visited demands the concentrated energies of the Church for its occupancy in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom it was promised in the second of the Psalms.

On board the "Missouri," Grand Canal, Jan. 5, 1877.