

# Forty Years in South China eBook

## Forty Years in South China

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## I. THE ANCESTRAL HOME

John Van Nest Talmage was born at Somerville, New Jersey, August 18, 1819 He was the fourth son in a family of seven brothers and five sisters.

The roots of the Talmage genealogical tree may be traced back to the year 1630, when Enos and Thomas Talmage, the progenitors of the Talmage family in North America, landed at Charlestown, Massachusetts, and afterwards settled at East Hampton, Long Island.

Dr. Lyman Beecher represents the first settlers of East Hampton as “men resolute, enterprising, acquainted with human nature, accustomed to do business, well qualified by education, circumspect, careful in dealing, friends of civil liberty, jealous of their rights, vigilant to discover, and firm to resist encroachments; eminently pious.”

In 1725 we find Daniel Talmage at Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Daniel's grandson, Thomas, during the years between 1775 and 1834 shifts his tent to Piscataway, New Jersey, thence to New Brunswick, thence to Somerville, where the stakes are driven firmly on a farm “beautiful for situation.” Thomas Talmage was a builder by trade, and erected some of the most important courthouses and public edifices in Somerset and Middlesex Counties. He was active in the Revolutionary war, holding the rank of major. It was said of him, “His name will be held in everlasting remembrance in the churches.” He was the father of seven sons and six daughters.

The third son, David T., the father of John Van Nest Talmage, was born at Piscataway, April 21, 1783. He was married to Catharine Van Nests Dec. 19, 1803. David T. Talmage was rather migratory in his instincts. The smoke of the Talmage home now curled out from a house at Mill stone, now from a homestead near Somerville, then from Gateville; then the family ark rested for many years on the outskirts of Somerville and finally it brought up at Bound Brook, New Jersey. Though the family tent was folded several times, it was not folded for more than a day's wagon journey before it was pitched again. The places designated arc all within the range of a single New Jersey county.

In 1836 David T. Talmage was elected a member of the State Legislature and was returned three successive terms. In 1841, he was chosen high sheriff of Somerset County. Four of his sons entered the Christian ministry, James R., John Van Nest, Goyn, and Thomas De Witt. James R., the senior brother, rendered efficient service in pastorates at Pompton Plains and Blawenburgh, New Jersey, and in Brooklyn, Greenbush, and Chittenango, New York. He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Rutgers College, New Jersey, in 1864. John Van Nest gave his life to China. Goyn, a most winsome man and eloquent preacher, ministered with marked success to the churches of Niskayuna, Green Point, Rhinebeck, and Port Jervis, New York, and

Paramus, New Jersey. He was for five years the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions of the Reformed Church. Rutgers College honored herself and him by giving him the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1876.

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Thomas De Witt, the youngest son, still ministers to the largest church in Protestant Christendom. What a river of blessing has flowed from that humble, cottage well-spring. The wilderness and the parched land have been made glad by it. The desert has been made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. The courses thereof have gone out into all the earth, and the tossing of its waves have been heard to the end of the world.

In November, 1865, Dr. T. De Witt Talmage preached a sermon on "The Beauty of Old Age"[\*] from the words in Eccles. xii. 5, "The Almond Tree shall flourish." It was commemorative of his father, David T. Talmage. He says: "I have stood, for the last few days, as under the power of an enchantment. Last Friday-a-week, at eighty-three years of age, my father exchanged earth for heaven. The wheat was ripe, and it has been harvested. No painter's pencil or poet's rhythm could describe that magnificent sun setting. It was no hurricane blast let loose; but a gale from heaven, that drove into the dust the blossoms of that almond tree.

[Footnote \*: This sermon gives so graphic and tender a portrayal of the father of one of America's most distinguished ministerial families, that the author feels justified in making so lengthy an extract.]

"There are lessons for me to learn, and also for you, for many of you knew him. The child of his old age, I come to-night to pay an humble tribute to him, who, in the hour of my birth, took me into his watchful care, and whose parental faithfulness, combined with that of my mother, was the means of bringing my erring feet to the cross, and kindling in my soul anticipations of immortal blessedness. If I failed to speak, methinks the old family Bible, that I brought home with me, would rebuke my silence, and the very walls of my youthful home would tell the story of my ingratitude. I must speak, though it be with broken utterance, and in terms which seem too strong for those of you who never had an opportunity of gathering the fruit of this luxuriant almond tree.

"First. In my father's old age was to be seen the beauty of a cheerful spirit. I never remember to have heard him make a gloomy expression. This was not because he had no conception of the pollutions of society. He abhorred everything like impurity, or fraud, or double-dealing. He never failed to lift up his voice against sin, when he saw it. He was terrible in his indignation against wrong, and had an iron grip for the throat of him who trampled on the helpless. Better meet a lion robbed of her whelps than him, if you had been stealing the bread from the mouth of the fatherless. It required all the placidity of my mother's voice to calm him when once the mountain storm of his righteous wrath was in full blast; while as for himself, he would submit to more imposition, and say nothing, than any man I ever knew.



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“But while sensitive to the evils of society, he felt confident that all would be righted. When he prayed, you could hear in the very tones of his voice the expectation that Christ Jesus would utterly demolish all iniquity, and fill the earth with His glory. This Christian man was not a misanthrope, did not think that everything was going to ruin, considered the world a very good place to live in. He never sat moping or despondent, but took things as they were, knowing that God could and would make them better. When the heaviest surge of calamity came upon him, he met it with as cheerful a countenance as ever a bather at the beach met the incoming Atlantic, rising up on the other side of the wave stronger than when it smote him. Without ever being charged with frivolity, he sang, and whistled, and laughed. He knew about all the cheerful tunes that were ever printed in old ‘New Brunswick Collection,’ and the ‘Strum Way,’ and the sweetest melodies that Thomas Hastings ever composed. I think that every pillar in the Somerville and Bound Brook churches knew his happy voice. He took the pitch of sacred song on Sabbath morning, and lost it not through all the week. I have heard him sing plowing amid the aggravations of a ‘new ground,’ serving writs, examining deeds, going to arrest criminals, in the house and by the way, at the barn and in the street. When the church choir would break down, everybody looked around to see if he were not ready with Woodstock, Mount Pisgah, or Uxbridge. And when all his familiar tunes failed to express the joy of his soul, he would take up his own pen, draw five long lines across the sheet, put in the notes, and then to the tune that he called ‘Bound Brook’ begin to sing:

‘As when the weary trav’ler gains  
The height of some o’erlooking hill,  
His heart revives if, ‘cross the plains,  
He eyes his home, tho’ distant still:

Thus, when the Christian pilgrim views,  
By faith, his mansion in the skies;  
The sight his fainting strength renews,  
And wings his speed to reach the prize.

“‘Tis there,” he says, “I am to dwell  
With Jesus in the realms of day:  
There I shall bid my cares farewell,  
And he will wipe my tears away.”

“But few families fell heir to so large a pile of well-studied note-books. He was ready, at proper times, for all kinds of innocent amusement. He often felt a merriment that not only touched the lips, but played upon every fibre of the body, and rolled down into the very depths of his soul, with long reverberations. No one that I ever knew understood more fully the science of a good laugh. He was not only quick to recognize hilarity when created by others, but was always ready to do his share toward making it. Before extreme old age, he could outrun and outleap any of his children. He did not hide his

satisfaction at having outwalked some one who boasted of his pedestrianism, or at having been able

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to swing the scythe after all the rest of the harvesters had dropped from exhaustion, or at having, in legislative hall, tripped up some villainous scheme for robbing the public treasury. We never had our ears boxed, as some children I wot of, for the sin of being happy. In long winter nights it was hard to tell who enjoyed sportfulness the better, the children who romped the floor, or the parents who, with lighted countenance, looked at them. Great indulgence and leniency characterized his family rule, but the remembrance of at least one correction more emphatic than pleasing proves that he was not like Eli of old, who had wayward sons and restrained them not. In the multitude of his witticisms there were no flings at religion, no caricatures of good men, no trifling with things of eternity. His laughter was not the 'crackling of thorns under a pot,' but the merry heart that doeth good like a medicine. For this all the children of the community knew him; and to the last day of his walking out, when they saw him coming down the lane, shouted, 'Here comes grandfather!' No gall, no acerbity, no hypercriticism. If there was a bright side to anything, he always saw it, and his name, in all the places where he dwelt, will long be a synonym for exhilaration of spirit.

"But whence this cheerfulness? Some might ascribe it ail to natural disposition. No doubt there is such a thing as sunshine of temperament. God gives more brightness to the almond tree than to the cypress. While the pool putrefies under the summer sun, God slips the rill off of the rocks with a frolicsomeness that fills the mountain with echo. No doubt constitutional structure had much to do with this cheerfulness. He had, by a life of sobriety, preserved his freshness and vigor. You know that good habits are better than speaking tubes to the ear; better than a staff to the hand; better than lozenges to the throat; better than warm baths to the feet; better than bitters for the stomach. His lips had not been polluted, nor his brain befogged, by the fumes of the noxious weed that has sapped the life of whole generations, sending even ministers of the Gospel to untimely graves, over which the tombstone declared, 'Sacrificed by overwork in the Lord's vineyard,' when if the marble had not lied, it would have said, 'Killed by villainous tobacco!' He abhorred anything that could intoxicate, being among the first in this country to join the crusade against alcoholic beverages. When urged, during a severe sickness, to take some stimulus, he said, 'No! If I am to die, let me die sober!' The swill of the brewery had never been poured around the roots of this thrifty almond. To the last week of his life his ear could catch a child's whisper, and at fourscore years his eyes refused spectacles, although he would sometimes have to hold the book off on the other side of the light, as octogenarians are wont to do. No trembling of the hands, no rheum in the eyes, no knocking together of the knees,

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no hobbling on crutches with what polite society terms rheumatism in the feet, but what everybody knows is nothing but gout. Death came, not to fell the gnarled trunk of a tree worm-eaten and lightning-blasted, but to hew down a Lebanon cedar, whose fall made the mountains tremble and the heavens ring. But physical health could not account for half of this sunshine. Sixty-four years ago a coal from the heavenly altar had kindled a light that shone brighter and brighter to the perfect day. Let Almighty grace for nearly three-quarters of a century triumph in a man's soul, and do you wonder that he is happy? For twice the length of your life and mine he had sat in the bower of the promises, plucking the round, ripe clusters of Eshcol. While others bit their tongues for thirst, he stood at the wells of salvation, and put his lips to the bucket that came up dripping with the fresh, cool, sparkling waters of eternal life. This joy was not that which breaks in the bursting bubble of the champagne glass, or that which is thrown out with the orange-peelings of a midnight bacchanalia, but the joy which, planted by a Saviour's pardoning grace, mounts up higher and higher, till it breaks forth in the acclaim of the hundred and forty and four thousand who have broken their last chain and wept their last sorrow. Oh! mighty God! How deep, how wide, how high the joy Thou kindles" in the heart of the believer!

"Again: We behold in our father the beauty of a Christian faith.

"Let not the account of this cheerfulness give you the idea that he never had any trouble. But few men have so serious and overwhelming a life struggle. He went out into the world without means, and with no educational opportunity, save that which was afforded him in the winter months, in an old, dilapidated school-house, from instructors whose chief work was to collect their own salary. Instead of postponing the marriage relation, as modern society compels a young man to postpone it, until he can earn a fortune, and be able, at commencement of the conjugal relation, to keep a companion like the lilies of the field, that toil not nor spin, though Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these—he chose an early alliance with one, who would not only be able to enjoy the success of his life, but who would with her own willing hands help achieve it. And so while father plowed the fields, and threshed the wheat, and broke the flax, and husked the corn, my mother stood for Solomon's portraiture, when he said, 'She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet. Her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.' So that the limited estate of the New Jersey farmer never foundered



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on millinery establishments and confectionery shops. And though we were some years of age before we heard the trill of a piano, we knew well about the song of 'The Spinning-wheel.' There were no lords, or baronets, or princes in our ancestral line. None wore stars, cockade, or crest. There was once a family coat of arms, but we were none of us wise enough to tell its meaning. Do our best, we cannot find anything about our forerunners, except that they behaved well, came over from Wales or Holland a good while ago, and died when their time came. Some of them may have had fine equipage and caparisoned postillion, but the most of them were only footmen. My father started in life belonging to the aristocracy of hard knuckles and homespun, but had this high honor that no one could despise. He was the son of a father who loved God, and kept His commandments. What is the House of Hapsburg or Stuarts, compared with being son of the Lord God Almighty? Two eyes, two hands, and two feet, were the capital my father started with. For fifteen years an invalid, he had a fearful struggle to support his large family. Nothing but faith in God upheld him. His recital of help afforded, and deliverances wrought, was more like a romance than a reality. He walked through many a desert, but every morning had its manna, and every night it's pillar of fire, and every hard rock a rod that could shatter it into crystal fountains at his feet. More than once he came to his last dollar; but right behind that last dollar he found Him who owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and out of the palm of whose hand all the fowls of heaven peck their food, and who hath given to each one of His disciples a warrantable deed for the whole universe in the words, 'All are yours.'

"The path that led him through financial straits, prepared him also for sore bereavements. The infant of days was smitten, and he laid it into the river of death with as much confidence as infant Moses was laid into the Ark of the Nile, knowing that soon from the royal palace a shining One would come to fetch it.

"In an island of the sea, among strangers, almost unattended, death came to a beloved son; and though I remember the darkness that dropped on the household when the black-sealed letter was opened, I remember also the utterances of Christian submission.

"Another bearing his own name, just on the threshold of manhood, his heart beating high with hope, falls into the dust; but above the cries of early widowhood and the desolation of that dark day, I hear the patriarch's prayer, commending children, and children's children, to the Divine sympathy.



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“But a deeper shadow fell across the old home-stead. The ‘Golden Wedding’ had been celebrated nine years before. My mother looked up, pushed back her spectacles, and said, ‘Just think of it, father! We have been together fifty-nine years!’ The twain stood together like two trees of the forest with interlocked branches. Their affections had taken deep root together in many a kindred grave. Side by side in life’s great battle, they had fought the good fight and won the day. But death comes to unjoint this alliance. God will not any longer let her suffer mortal ailments. The reward of righteousness is ready, and it must be paid. But what a tearing apart! What rending up! What will the aged man do without this other to lean on? Who can so well understand how to sympathize and counsel? What voice so cheering as hers, to conduct him down the steep of old age? ‘Oh’ said she in her last moments, ‘father, if you and I could only be together, how pleasant it would be!’ But the hush of death came down one autumnal afternoon, and for the first time in all my life, on my arrival at home, I received no maternal greeting, no answer of the lips, no pressure of the hand. God had taken her.

“In this overwhelming shock the patriarch stood confident, reciting the promises and attesting the Divine goodness. O, sirs, that was faith, faith, faith! ‘Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory!’

“Finally, I noticed that in my father’s old age was to be seen the beauty of Christian activity. He had not retired from the field. He had been busy so long you could not expect him idle now. The faith I have described was not an idle expectation that sits with its hands in its pockets idly waiting, but a feeling which gathers up all the resources of the soul, and hurls them upon one grand design. He was among the first who toiled in Sabbath-schools, and never failed to speak the praise of these institutions. No storm or darkness ever kept him away from prayer-meeting. In the neighborhood where he lived for years held a devotional meeting. Oftentimes the only praying man present, before a handful of attendants, he would give out the hymn, read the lines, conduct the music, and pray. Then read the Scriptures and pray again. Then lead forth in the Doxology with an enthusiasm as if there were a thousand people present, and all the church members had been doing their duty. He went forth visiting the sick, burying the dead, collecting alms for the poor, inviting the ministers of religion to his household, in which there was, as in the house of Shunem, a little room over the wall, with bed and candlestick for any passing Elisha. He never shuddered at the sight of a subscription paper, and not a single great cause of benevolence has arisen within the last half century which he did not bless with his beneficence. Oh, this was not a barren almond tree that blossomed. His charity was not like the bursting of the bud of a famous tree in the

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South that fills the whole forest with its racket; nor was it a clumsy thing like the fruit, in some tropical clime, that crashes down, almost knocking the life out of those who gather it; for in his case the right hand knew not what the left hand did. The churches of God in whose service he toiled, have arisen as one man to declare his faithfulness and to mourn their loss. He stood in the front of the holy war, and the courage which never trembled or winced in the presence of temporal danger induced him to dare all things for God. In church matters he was not afraid to be shot at. Ordained, not by the laying on of human hands, but by the imposition of a Saviour's love, he preached by his life, in official position, and legislative hall, and commercial circles, a practical Christianity. He showed that there was such a thing as honesty in politics. He slandered no party, stuffed no ballot box, forged no naturalization papers, intoxicated no voters, told no lies, surrendered no principle, countenanced no demagogism. He called things by their right names; and what others styled prevarication, exaggeration, misstatement or hyperbole, he called a lie. Though he was far from being undecided in his views, and never professed neutrality, or had any consort with those miserable men who boast how well they can walk on both sides of a dividing line and be on neither, yet even in the excitements of election canvass, when his name was hotly discussed in public journals, I do not think his integrity was ever assaulted. Starting every morning with a chapter of the Bible, and his whole family around him on their knees, he forgot not, in the excitements of the world, that he had a God to serve and a heaven to win. The morning prayer came up on one side of the day, and the evening prayer on the other side, and joined each other in an arch above his head, under the shadow of which he walked all the day. The Sabbath worship extended into Monday's conversation, and Tuesday's bargain, and Wednesday's mirthfulness, and Thursday's controversy, and Friday's sociality, and Saturday's calculation.

“Through how many thrilling scenes had he passed! He stood, at Morristown, in the choir that chanted when George Washington was buried; talked with young men whose grandfathers he had held on his knee; watched the progress of John Adams' administration; denounced, at the time, Aaron Burr's infamy; heard the guns that celebrated the New Orleans victory; voted against Jackson, but lived long enough to wish we had one just like him; remembered when the first steamer struck the North River with it's wheel buckets; flushed with excitement in the time of national banks and sub-treasury; was startled at the birth of telegraphy; saw the United States grow from a speck on the world's map till all nations dip their flag at our passing merchantmen, and our 'national airs' have been heard on the steps of the Himalayas; was born while the Revolutionary cannon were coming

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home from Yorktown, and lived to hear the tramp of troops returning from the war of the great Rebellion; lived to speak the names of eighty children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Nearly all his contemporaries gone! Aged Wilberforce said that sailors drink to 'friends astern' until halfway over the sea, and then drink to 'friends ahead.' So, also, with my father. Long and varied pilgrimage! Nothing but sovereign grace could have kept him true, earnest, useful, and Christian through so many exciting scenes.

"He worked unwearily from the sunrise of youth, to the sunset of old age, and then in the sweet nightfall of death, lighted by the starry promises, went home, taking his sheaves with him. Mounting from earthly to heavenly service, I doubt not there were a great multitude that thronged heaven's gate to hail him into the skies,—those whose sorrows he had appeased, whose burdens he had lifted, whose guilty souls he had pointed to a pardoning God, whose dying moments he had cheered, whose ascending spirits he had helped up on the wings of sacred music. I should like to have heard that long, loud, triumphant shout of heaven's welcome. I think that the harps throbbed with another thrill, and the hills quaked with a mightier hallelujah. Hail! ransomed soul! Thy race run,—thy toil ended! Hail to the coronation!"

At the death of David T. Talmage the Christian Intelligencer of October 25, 1865, contained the following contribution from the pen of Dr. T.W. Chambers, for many years pastor of the Second Reformed Church, Somerville, New Jersey, now one of the pastors of the Collegiate Church, New York:

"In the latter part of the last century, Thomas Talmage, Sr., a plain but intelligent farmer, moved into the neighborhood of Somerville, N.J., and settled upon a fertile tract of land, very favorably situated, and commanding a view of the country for miles around. Here he spent the remainder of a long, godly, and useful life, and reared a large family of children, twelve of whom were spared to reach adult years, and to make and adorn the same Christian profession of which their father was a shining light. Two of these became ministers of the Gospel, of whom one, Jehiel, fell asleep several years since, while the other, the distinguished Samuel K. Talmage, D.D., President of Oglethorpe University, Georgia, entered into his rest only a few weeks since. Another son, Thomas, was for an entire generation the strongest pillar in the Second Church of Somerville.

"One of the oldest of the twelve was the subject of this notice; a man whose educational advantages were limited to the local schools of the neighborhood, but whose excellent natural abilities, sharpened by contact with the world, gave him a weight in the community which richer and more cultivated men might have envied. In the prime of his years he was often called to serve his fellow citizens in civil trusts. He spent some years in the popular branch of the Legislature,



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and was afterwards high sheriff of the County of Somerset for the usual period. In both cases he fulfilled the expectations of his friends, and rendered faithful service. The sterling integrity of his character manifested itself in every situation; and even in the turmoil of politics, at a time of much excitement, he maintained a stainless name, and defied the tongue of calumny. But it was chiefly in the sphere of private and social relations that his work was done and his influence exerted. His father's piety was reproduced in him at an early period, and soon assumed a marked type of thoroughness, activity and decision, which it bore even to the end. His long life was one of unblemished Christian consistency, which in no small measure was due to the influence of his excellent wife, Catherine Van Nest, a niece of the late Abraham Van Nest, of New York City, who a few years preceded him into glory. She was the most godly woman the writer ever knew, a wonder unto many for the strength of her faith, the profoundness of her Christian experience, and the uniform spirituality of her mind. The ebb and flow common to most believers did not appear in her; but her course was like a river fed by constant streams, and running on wider and deeper till it reaches the sea. It might be said of this pair, as truly as of the parents of John the Baptist, 'And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.' Hand in hand they pursued their pilgrimage through this world, presenting an example of intelligent piety such as is not often seen. 'Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in their death they were not (long) divided.' Exactly three years from the day of Mrs. Talmage's death her husband received the summons to rejoin her on high.

"These parents were unusually careful and diligent in discharging their Christian obligations to their children. The promise of the covenant was importunately implored in their behalf from the moment of birth, its seal was early applied, and the whole training was after the pattern of Abraham. The Divine faithfulness was equally manifest, for the whole eleven were in due time brought to the Saviour, and introduced into the full communion of the Church. Years ago two of them were removed by death. Of the rest, four, James, John, Goyn, and Thomas De Witt, are ministers of the Gospel, and one is the wife of a minister (the Rev. S. L. Mershon, of East Hampton, L.I.). Without entering into details respecting these brethren, it is sufficient to say that, with the exception of the late Dr. John Scudder's, no other single family has been the means of making such a valuable contribution to the sons of Levi in the Dutch Church.

"Mr. Talmage was not only exemplary in the ordinary duties of a Christian, but excellent as a church officer. Shrewd, patient, kind, generous according to his means, and full of quiet zeal, he was ready for every good work; one of those men—the delight of a pastor's heart—who can always be relied upon to do their share, if not a little more, and that in things both temporal and spiritual. He was a wise counselor, a true friend, a self-sacrificing laborer for the Master."



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We find the following allusion to the life and death of his mother, in a sermon by Dr. T. De Witt Talmage:

“In these remarks upon maternal faithfulness, I have found myself unconsciously using as a model the character of one, who, last Wednesday, we put away for the resurrection. About sixty years ago, just before the day of their marriage, my father and mother stood up in the old meeting-house, at Somerville, to take the vows of a Christian. Through a long life of vicissitude she lived blamelessly and usefully, and came to her end in peace. No child of want ever came to her door, and was turned away. No stricken soul ever appealed to her and was not comforted. No sinner ever asked her the way to be saved, and was not pointed to Christ.

“When the Angel of Life came to a neighbor’s dwelling, she was there to rejoice at the incarnation; and when the Angel of Death came, she was there to robe the departed one for burial. We had often heard her, while kneeling among her children at family prayers, when father was absent, say: ‘I ask not for my children wealth, or honor; but I do ask that they may all become the subjects of Thy converting grace.’ She had seen all her eleven children gathered into the Church, and she had but one more wish, and that was that she might again see her missionary son. And when the ship from China anchored in New York harbor, and the long absent one crossed the threshold of his paternal home, she said, ‘Now, Lord, lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.’

“We were gathered from afar to see only the house from which the soul had fled forever. How calm she looked! Her folded hands appeared just as when they were employed in kindnesses for her children. And we could not help but say, as we stood and looked at her, ‘Doesn’t she look beautiful!’ It was a cloudless day when, with heavy hearts, we carried her out to the last resting-place. The withered leaves crumbled under wheel and hoof as we passed, and the setting sun shone upon the river until it looked like fire. But more calm and bright was the setting sun of this aged pilgrim’s life. No more toil. No more tears. No more sickness. No more death. Dear mother! Beautiful mother!

“Sweet is the slumber beneath the sod,  
While the pure soul is resting with God.”

## II. CALL TO CHINA AND VOYAGE HENCE

The known facts in regard to John Talmage’s boyhood and youthful days are few. Of the known facts some perhaps are too trivial, others too sacred to bear mention. The sapling grew. Of the inner and outer circles of growth there is but brief record.



He spent his boyhood at a quiet country hamlet, Gateville, New Jersey. On the ridge swung the toll-gate, and a little beyond might be heard the hum and rattle of the grist-mill. His father kept the toll-gate. John was a fine horseman, and found great sport in jumping on his horse and chasing the people who had "cheated the gate" by not paying their toll. John knew the law and was not afraid to go for them. He went to a private school under the care of a Mr. Morton at the village of Bound Brook, two miles from home, and generally stood at the head of his class.

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He early became the judge and counselor among his brothers and sisters. In any little dispute which arose, John's verdict was usually accepted as correct and final.

During all his missionary career in China, he was an adviser and arbitrator whom foreigners and Chinese alike sought and from whose advice they were not quick to turn away.

In the midst of the tumult among the men of Medina when they met to elect a chief to take the place of Mohammed, who had passed away, the voice of Hohab was heard crying out, "Attend to me, attend to me, for I am the well-rubbed Palm-stem." The figure Hobab used represented a palm-trunk left for the beasts to come and rub themselves upon. It was a metaphor for a person much resorted to for counsel. John Talmage never called attention to himself, but the Arab chief must have counseled many, and well, to have taken a higher place than did this messenger of Christ at Amoy.

By the time John Talmage's school days at Bound Brook were completed he had determined to prepare for college. Preparatory schools then were few and far away. They were expensive. John made an arrangement with his senior brother, Rev. James R. Talmage, then pastor at Blawenburgh, New Jersey, to put him through the required course. Here he joined the Church at the age of seventeen. From Blawenburgh his brother Goyn and he went to New Brunswick, New Jersey, joining the Sophomore class in Rutgers College. John and Goyn roomed together, swept and garnished their own quarters and did their own cooking. Father Talmage would come down every week or two with provisions from the farm, to replenish the ever-recipient larder. Both John and Goyn were diligent students and graduated with honorable recognition from Rutgers College in 1842, and from New Brunswick Theological Seminary in 1845.

John Talmage had made such substantial attainments in Hebrew and Greek, that when some years afterward the distinguished Dr. McClelland resigned as professor of these languages in the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, he was talked of as Dr. McClelland's successor, and but for the conviction that he ought not to be removed from the Amoy Mission, his appointment would have been earnestly advocated by the General Synod.

John Talmage had read missionary biographies when a boy in the Sunday-school at Bound Brook. He had been specially touched by the life of Henry Martyn. While at college he kept himself supplied with missionary literature. His parents were already interested in foreign missions. In secret before God his mother had devoted John to this very work. John did not know it. The determining word for him was that spoken in a missionary address, by Rev. Elihu Doty, one of the pioneers of the Amoy Mission. It was plain that he must go to the "regions beyond." He must break the news to his mother. John's love of missionary literature and his eager attendance upon missionary meetings had filled the family with a secret fear that he thought



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of going. One day he invited his younger sister, Catharine, to take a walk with him across the fields. He began to talk about missions to foreign lands. Finally he said, "Catharine, you must help me prepare the way to tell mother that I want to go to China." Too overcome with emotion was the sister to reply. They walked home in silence. John sought opportunity when he could quietly tell his mother. Said he, "Mother, I am going to China." In the intensity of a mother's love she replied, "Oh, John, it will kill me." But the grace of God triumphed and again she said, "I prayed to God for this, how can I object?"

In October, 1845, he applied to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, through Dr. Thomas De Witt, the Secretary for the Reformed Church. The letter is still in possession. An extract from it reads:

"I was twenty-five years of age last August, reside at Somerville, New Jersey, have been blessed with Christian parents and enjoyed an early religious education. By the assistance of friends and the Church, I have been enabled to pursue the usual course of study preparatory in our Church to entering upon the duties of the Gospel ministry. I graduated at Rutgers College in the summer of 1842, pursued my theological studies in our seminary at New Brunswick, and received from the Classis of Philadelphia, July last, 'license' to preach the Gospel.

"Owing doubtless in great measure to the religious advantages I have enjoyed, my mind has been more or less under religious impressions from my earliest recollection. About eight years ago I united on confession of faith with the Church (Reformed Dutch) at Blawenburgh, New Jersey, of which my brother, Rev. James R. Talmage, was then and still is pastor. Was living in his family at the time, and studying with him preparatory to entering college. I am unable to decide when I met with a change of heart. My reason for believing that I have experienced such a change are the evidences within me that I love my Saviour, love His cause, and love the souls of men.

"My reason for desiring the missionary work is a desire for the salvation of the heathen. My mind has been directed to the subject for a long time, yet I have not felt at liberty to decide the question where duty called me to labor until the last month. In accordance with this decision I now offer my services to the Board to labor in my Master's service among the heathen. As a field of labor I prefer China."

Owing to deficiency in funds the Board could not send him that year. He accepted an invitation to assist Dr. Brodhead, then pastor of the Central Reformed Church of Brooklyn. Dr. Brodhead was one of the great preachers of his day. In Philadelphia, an earlier pastorate, "he preached to great congregations of eager listeners, and with a success unparalleled in the history of that city and rare in modern times." John Van Nest Talmage might have been his successor. But no sooner was



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the Board ready to send him than he was prepared to go. The day for leaving home came. Father Talmage and the older brothers accompanied John. They left the house in three carriages. A younger sister (Mrs. Cone) recently said: "When we saw the three carriages driving down the lane it seemed more like a funeral than anything else." Silent were those who drove away. Silent, silent as they could constrain themselves to be, were mother and sisters as they stood by the windows and got their last look of the procession as it wound down the road. To go to a foreign land in those days signified to those who went, lifelong exile,—to those who tarried, lifelong separation. The only highways to the far East were by way of the Cape of Good Hope or Cape Horn. The voyages were always long and often perilous.

When on board the ship *Roman*, bound for Canton, David Abeel wrote: "To the missionary perhaps exclusively, is the separation from friends like the farewell of death. Though ignorant of the future he expects no further intercourse on earth. To him the next meeting is generally beyond the grave."

The hour of departure was not only saddened by parting from parents and brothers and sisters, but the young woman in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, to whom he had given his affection, could not join him. Once it had been decided that they were to go together, but during the last days the enfeebled widowed mother's courage failed her. She could not relinquish her daughter to what seemed to her separation for life. Mr. Talmage had to choose between the call of duty to China and going alone, or tarrying at home and realizing his heart's hopes. He went to China. By a special Providence it was not much more than two years after he set sail that he was again in the United States. The mother of Miss Abby Woodruff had died, and the union was consummated.

Mr. Talmage kept a diary of the voyage. A few extracts will prove interesting.

"Left Somerville April 10, 1847, via New York to Boston. Sailed from Boston in ship *Heber*, April 15th. Farewell services on board conducted by Bishop Janes, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The *Heber* is a ship of 436 tons, 136 feet long, 27 wide. Among the passengers are Rev. E. Doty and wife, and Rev. Moses C White and wife, and Rev. I. D. Collins. The three latter are Methodist missionaries bound for Foochow (China)." They were the pioneers of Methodist missions in China.

On Thursday evening, the day of sailing, he writes: "I am now upon the bosom of the mighty deep. But I cannot as yet feel any fear. I am in the hands of the Being 'whose I am and whom I serve.' In His hands there is safety. I will not fear though the earth be removed. Besides, there are Christian friends praying for me. Oh, the consolation in the assurance that at the throne of grace I am remembered by near and dear friends! Will not their prayers be heard? They will. I know they will. The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much! When I took leave of my friends, one, and another,

and another, assured me that they would remember me in their prayers. Yes, and I will remember them.”



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April 17th. Speaking of Mr. Collins, he says: "I think we shall much enjoy ourselves. We shall study, read, sing, and pray together, talk and walk together. From present appearances we shall feel towards each other as David and Jonathan did." Mr. Collins was a man of intense missionary convictions, who declared if there were no means to send him to China he would find his way before the mast, and work his way there.

"April 22. We have now been one week on our voyage. We commenced our studies today. Mr. Doty, Collins, and myself have organized ourselves into a Hebrew class. We expect to have a daily recitation in Hebrew, another in Greek, and another in Chinese."

"May 8th. Saturday evening. We have been out 23 days. We have had our worship as usual in the cabin. Since then we have spent some time in singing hymns. Have been led to think of home. Wonder where and how my many friends are? Are they happy? Are they well? Are they all alive? Is it strange that sadness sometimes steals over my mind, when I think of those whom I love, and remember their weeping eyes and sorrowful countenances at the time of bidding them farewell, perhaps never again to see them in this world."

He had decided to take a text of Scripture for daily meditation, following the order in a little book published by the American Tract Society entitled "Dew Drops."

"The text for today is 1 Pet. ii. 21. 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.'

"Why should the Christian tremble at the prospect of suffering, or be impatient under its existence? 'The servant is not greater than his Lord.' The 'King of Glory' suffered, and shall a sinful man complain? Besides, the Christian should be willing to suffer for the welfare of others. If he can benefit his fellow-men by running the risk of losing his own life, shall he hesitate to run that risk?"

"May 11. Since Sunday noon have made little progress."

On examining the record of the voyage which Mr. Talmage kept faithfully every day, we find that the ship had made only twenty seven knots in two days.

"June 18. For the last month we have not made rapid progress. We have experienced much detention from head-winds and calms. About a week ago we were put on an allowance of water, one gallon a day to each one on board. This includes all that is used for cooking, drinking and washing."

"Have had quite a severe storm this afternoon and evening. The waves have been very high, and the wind—severe almost as a hurricane. This evening about 8 o'clock, after a very severe blow and heavy dash of rain, 'fire balls,' as the sailors termed them, were



seen upon the tops of the masts, and also on the ends of the spars, which cross the masts. They presented a very beautiful appearance.

“Brother Collins and myself have this week commenced the study of Pitman’s System of Phonography.” That Mr. Talmage became proficient in the use of it is evident from the fact that much of his journal was written in shorthand.

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“On the Sabbath Brother Collins and myself spend two hours in the fore-castle instructing the sailors. Many of them seem perfectly willing, some of them anxious to receive instruction.”

“July 17. Saturday evening. Today passed to the eastward of Christmas Island (an island in the Indian Ocean). It is a small island about ten miles square. This is the first land seen since we left Boston. Of course, we gazed with much interest.”

“July 22. About nine o'clock Tuesday evening we anchored off Angier. This is a village off the island of Java, bordering on the Straits of Sunda. Remained at Angier until Wednesday afternoon. Capt. Patterson laid in a good supply of pigs, geese, ducks, chickens, yams, turtles, water, two goats, and fruits of various kinds in abundance.”

“Aug. 6. Friday. Wednesday evening arrived at Macao. This morning set sail for Whampoa, twelve miles below Canton.”

After a few days at Canton and Hongkong, Mr. and Mrs. Doty and Mr. Talmage embarked for Amoy on the schooner Caroline.

“Aug 21. The Caroline is a small vessel of about one hundred and fifty tons burthen. She was built, I suppose, for the opium trade. Our passage from Hongkong was not very pleasant. Our quarters were close and our captain was far from being an agreeable companion. He drank freely and was very profane.”

“We left Brother Collins and Brother White and wife at Hongkong. We had been so long in company with these brethren, that it was trying to part with them. On Thursday, the day before yesterday, we arrived safely at Amoy. The brethren gave us a very hearty welcome. The missionary company at this place consists of Brother Pohlman, of the A.B.C.F.M.; Mr. Alexander Stronach and wife, and Brown, of the Presbyterian Board. Mr. John Stronach also belongs to this station. He is at present at Shanghai.”

### **III. THE CITY OF THE “ELEGANT GATE”[\*]**

[Footnote \*: the meaning of the two Chinese characters composing the name Amoy.]

In a letter to the Sabbath-school of the Central Reformed Church, Brooklyn, Mr. Talmage thus describes the southern emporium of the province of Fukien:

“Amoy is situated on an island of the same name. The city proper or citadel is about one mile in circumference. Its form is nearly that of a rhomboid or diamond. It is surrounded by a wall about twenty feet in height, and eight or ten feet in thickness, built of large blocks of coarse granite. It has four gates. The outer city, or city outside of the walls, is much more extensive. Its circumference, I suppose, is about six miles.



“The streets are not so wide as the sidewalks in Brooklyn. Some of them are so narrow that, when two persons, walking in opposite directions, meet each other, it is necessary for the one to stop, in order that the other may pass on. The most of the streets are paved with coarse granite blocks, yet on account of the narrowness of the streets, and the want of cleanliness by the great mass of the inhabitants, the streets are usually very filthy.

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“This part of Amoy island is rugged and mountainous, and interspersed with large granite rocks. Some of them are of immense size. It is in such a place that the city has been built. Many of these rocks are left in their natural position, and overhang the houses which have been built among them. The ground has not been leveled as in Brooklyn, consequently the greater part of the streets are uneven. Some of them are conducted over the hills by stone steps. Near our residences, one of the public streets ascends a hill by a flight of thirty-six steps. On account of this unevenness of the streets as well as their narrowness a carriage cannot pass through the city of Amoy. Instead of carriages the more wealthy inhabitants use sedan chairs, which are usually borne by two bearers. The higher officers of government, called ‘Mandarins,’ have four bearers to carry them. The greater part of the inhabitants always travel on foot. The place of carts is supplied by men called ‘coolies,’ whose employment is to carry burdens. The houses, except along the wharves and a few pawn-shops farther up in the city, are one story.

“There are no churches here, but there are far more temples for the worship of false gods, and the souls of deceased ancestors, than there are churches in Brooklyn.

“Besides these, almost every family has its shrine and idols and ancestral tablets, which last are worshipped with more devotion than the idols. In consequence of their religion the people are degraded and immoral. One-third of all female children born in the city of Amoy are slain. In the villages throughout this whole region, it is supposed that about one-half are destroyed. They do not exhibit sympathy for each other and for those in distress, which is enjoined by the Bible, and which, notwithstanding all its defects, is the glory of Christian communities. I have seen a man dying on the pavement on a street, almost as densely thronged as Broadway, New York, and no one of the passers-by, or of the inhabitants of that part of the street, seemed to notice him or care for him more than if he had been a dog.”

## DESCRIPTION OF AMOY AND AMOY ISLAND

Another letter to the same congregation a few months later reads:

“The first impression on the mind of an individual in approaching the shores of China from the south, and sailing along the coast, as far north as Amoy, is anything but favorable. So great is the contrast between the lovely scenery and dense vegetation of many of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and the barren and worn-out hills which line the southern part of the coast of China, that in the whole range of human language it would seem scarcely possible to find a more inappropriate term than the term ‘Celestial’ whereby to designate this great empire. Neither is this unfavorable opinion removed immediately on landing. The style of building is so inferior,



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the streets are so narrow and filthy, the countenances of the great mass of the people, at least to a newcomer, are so destitute of intelligent expression, and the bodies and clothing, and habits of the multitudes are so uncleanly, that one is compelled to exclaim in surprise, 'Are these the people who stand at the top of pagan civilization, and who look upon all men as barbarous, except themselves?' Besides, everything looks old. Buildings, temples, even the rocks and the hills have a peculiar appearance of age and seem to be falling into decay. I am happy to say, however, that as we become better acquainted with the country and the people, many of these unfavorable impressions are removed. After passing a little to the north of Amoy, the appearance of the coast entirely changes. Even in this mountainous region we have valleys and plains, which would suffer but little by comparison with any other country for beauty and fertility. I also love the scenery around the city of Amoy very much. The city is situated on the western side of an island of the same name. This part of the island in its general appearance is very similar to the coast of which I have spoken. It is rocky and mountainous and barren. There are, however, among these barren hills many small fertile spots, situated in the ravines and along the watercourses, which on account of their high state of cultivation form a lovely contrast with the surrounding barrenness. Wherever the Chinese, at least in this part of the Empire, can find a watercourse, by cultivation they will turn the most barren soil into a garden. The sides of the ravines are leveled by digging down, and walling up, if necessary, forming terraces or small fields, the one above the other. These small fields are surrounded by a border of impervious clay. The water is conducted into the higher of these terraces, and from them conducted into those which are lower, as the state of the crops may demand. Often a field of paddy may be seen inundated, while the next field below, in which perhaps the sweet potato is growing, is kept perfectly dry. Among the hills there is much of picturesque scenery, and some that is truly sublime. The Buddhists have exhibited an exquisite taste for natural scenery, in selecting such places for the situation of many of their temples."

### ANCESTRAL WORSHIP

"Their respect for ancestors is very great, so much so that the species of idolatry which has by far the strongest hold upon their minds is ancestral worship. This is the stronghold by which Satan maintains his supremacy over the minds of the people, and this we may expect will be the last to give way to the power of the Gospel of Christ. One may hold up their gods to ridicule and they will laugh at his remarks, but they do not love to hear the worship of their ancestors spoken against. This worship, after the period of mourning is over, consists chiefly in offering at stated times various articles of food



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to the spirits of the deceased, and in burning various kinds of paper, as a substitute for money, by which these spirits are supplied with that most convenient article. Natural affection and selfishness unite to strengthen their attachment to this worship. It is as necessary for the happiness of the souls of the dead, in the opinion of the Chinese, as is the saying of the mass in the opinion of a Roman Catholic. Without these attentions the souls of the deceased are in a sort of purgatory; wandering about in want and wretchedness. But if the desire of rendering their ancestors happy be not sufficient to secure attention to these rites, a still more powerful motive addresses itself to their minds. These wandering spirits are supposed capable of bringing misfortune and inflicting injuries on their ungrateful and impious descendants. Thus if a family meet with reverses, the cause is often attributed to the want of attention to the souls of the deceased ancestors, or to the fact that the sites of their graves have not been judiciously selected, and the dissatisfied spirits are taking vengeance for these neglects or mistakes. Another consideration which seems to exert much influence, is that if they neglect the spirits of their ancestors, their descendants may neglect them.

“For the present life they can think of no higher happiness than success in acquiring wealth, and the highest happiness after death consists in having sons to supply the wants of their spirits. These are the two objects that engross the highest aspirations of a Chinaman.”

### INFANTICIDE

“This will account in part for the barbarous custom of infanticide which prevails to so lamentable an extent among these heathen. Only female infants are destroyed. While the parents are living the son may be of pecuniary advantage to them, and after their death, he can attend to the rites of their souls, and even after his death, through him the parents may have descendants to perform the ancestral rites. A daughter on the contrary, it is supposed, will only prove a burden in a pecuniary point of view, and after she is married she is reckoned to the family of her husband. Her children, also, except her husband otherwise order, are only expected to attend to the spirits of their paternal ancestors.”

“Some have denied the existence of the practice of infanticide among the Chinese, or, they have asserted that if it does exist, the practice of it is very unusual. Every village which we visit in this region gives evidence that such persons are not acquainted with this part of the empire. A few days ago a company of us visited the village of Kokia. It is situated on the northern extremity of Amoy Island, and contains, perhaps, two thousand inhabitants. After walking through the village we sat down for a short time under the shade of a large banyan tree. A large concourse of people soon gathered around us

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to see the foreigners and hear what they had to say. In this crowd we found by counting nearly a hundred boys, and but two or three girls. Also when walking through the village very few girls were to be seen. The custom of binding the feet of the girls, which greatly affects their power of locomotion, would account for more boys being seen than girls, but will not account for the disparity noticed. We therefore inquired the cause of this disparity. They answered with laughter that female children are killed. The same question has been asked again and again at the various villages we have visited and the same answer obtained. This answer is given freely and apparently without any idea that the practice is wicked, until they are taught so by us. The result of this one practice on the morals of the people may readily be imagined. It accustoms the mind to acts of cruelty and it prepares the way for impurity and wickedness in forms that are never dreamed of in Christian countries.”

In this connection an extract from Dr. David Abeel's[\*] diary may be of value.

[Footnote \*: David Abeel was the founder of the American Reformed Mission at Amoy in 1842.]

“Today had a conversation with one of the merchants who come to Kolongsu for trade, on the subject of female infanticide. Assuming a countenance of as much indifference as possible, I asked him how many of his own children he had destroyed: he instantly replied, ‘Two.’ I asked him whether he had spared any. He said, ‘One I have saved.’ I then inquired how many brothers he had. ‘Eight,’ was the answer. I asked him how many children his eldest brother had destroyed. ‘Five or six.’ I inquired of the second, third and all the rest; some had killed four or five, some two or three, and others had none to destroy. I then asked how many girls were left among them all. ‘Three,’ was the answer. And how many do you think have been strangled at birth? ‘Probably from twelve to seventeen.’ I wished to know the standing and employment of his brothers. One, he said, had attained a literary degree at the public examinations; the second was a teacher; one was a sailor; and the rest were petty merchants like himself. Thus, it was evidently not necessity but a cold inhuman calculation of the gains and losses of keeping them, which must have led these men to take the lives of their own offspring.

“Mr. Boone’s teacher’s sister with her own hand destroyed her first three children successively. The fourth was also a girl, but the mother was afraid to lay violent hands on it, believing it to be one of the previous ones reappearing in a new body.”

“The names of the five districts in the Chinchew prefecture are Tong-an, An-khoe, Chinkiang, Hui-an and Lam-an. Amoy is situated in the Chin-chew prefect.



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“From a comparison with many other parts of the country, there is reason to believe that a greater number of children are destroyed at birth in the Tong-an district than in any other of this department, probably more than in any other of this department, probably more than in any other part of the province of equal extent and populousness. In the Tong-an district I have inquired of persons from forty different towns and villages. The number destroyed varies exceedingly in different places, the extremes extending from seventy and eighty percent to ten percent. The average proportion destroyed in all these places amounting to nearly four-tenths or exactly thirty-nine percent.

“In seventeen of these forty towns and villages, my informants declare that one-half or more are deprived of existence at birth.

“From the inhabitants of six places in Chin-kiang, and of four places in Hui-an, if I am correctly informed, the victims of infanticide do not exceed sixteen percent.

“In the seven districts of the Chiang-chiu prefecture the number is rather more than one-fourth or less than three-tenths.

“There is reason to fear that scarcely less than twenty-five percent are suffocated almost at the first breath.”

It is altogether probable that this vice is just as prevalent now. The scarcity of girls in nearly all the towns and villages and the exorbitant rates demanded for marriageable daughters in some districts, only render sad confirmation to what Drs. Abeel and Talmage wrote two score and more years ago.

## IS CHINA TO BE WON, AND HOW?

Mr. Talmage continues:

“I cannot close this letter without saying a word in reference to our prospects of success. The moral condition of this people, their spiritual apathy, their attachment to the superstitious rites of their ancestors, together with the natural depravity of the human heart, and at the same time their language being one of the most difficult, perhaps the most difficult of acquisition of any spoken language, all combine to forbid, it would seem, all hope of ever Christianizing this empire. But that which is impossible with men is possible with God. He who has commanded us to preach the Gospel to every creature, has connected with it a promise that He will be always with us to the end of the world. The stone cut out without hands, we are told by the prophet, became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. The kingdom which the God of heaven has set up ‘shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand for ever.’ Thus, whatever may be the prospect before us, according to human reasoning, we have ‘a more sure word of prophecy.’ Resting upon this we can have no doubt in



reference to the complete triumph of the cause of Christ, even over the land of Sinim. In connection with such prophecies and promises we have many facts to encourage us. The people are accessible and friendly, and willing to listen to our doctrines. The superiority of Christianity to their systems of religion, sometimes from conviction and sometimes perhaps only from politeness, they often admit.

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“Already a few converts have been gathered into the visible Church, and there are others who are seeking to know the way of life more perfectly. Those who have been received into the Church are letting their light shine. The conduct of some who have heard the truth, reminds us forcibly of the conduct of the woman at the well of Samaria, and of the conduct of Andrew and Philip when they first found the Messias.

“It is thus that this empire and most other heathen countries must be evangelized. The work must be done by the natives. The Church in Christian lands, by her missionaries, can only lay the foundation and render some little assistance in rearing the superstructure. She can never carry forward the work to completion. She can never furnish the heathen nations with missionaries of the cross in sufficient numbers to supply them with pastors, neither is it necessary that she should. The Christian is a light shining in a dark place. Especially is it true among the heathen, that every disciple of Christ is as ‘a city set on a hill which cannot be hid.’ His neighbors and acquaintances must observe the change in his conduct. He no longer worships their gods. He no longer observes any of their superstitious rites. He is no longer a slave to their immoralities. his example must tell. But many of the converts will have gifts to make known the Gospel, and will eagerly embrace these gifts in order to rescue their dying countrymen. Already have we examples of this. Such converts, also, in some respects, may be more efficient than the missionary. They can go where we cannot, and reach those who are entirely beyond our influence. They are better acquainted with the language. They understand the customs of the people more thoroughly. They remember what were the greatest difficulties and objections which proved the greatest obstacles to their reception of the Gospel, and they know how these difficulties were removed and these objections answered. Besides, they have all the advantages which a native must be expected to possess over a foreigner arising from the prejudices of the people.

“Perhaps it may be necessary to guard against a wrong inference, which might be hastily deduced from the facts just stated. The fact that the natives are to be the principal laborers in evangelizing this empire, does not in the least remove the obligation of the Church to quicken and redouble all her efforts, or supersede the necessity for such efforts. It will be many years before this necessity will cease to exist. The Churches in Christian lands, in resolving to undertake the evangelization of this empire, have engaged in great work. In obedience to the command of their Master they have undertaken to rear a vast superstructure, the foundation of which is to be laid entirely by themselves, and on the erection of which they must bestow their care and assistance. This work has been commenced under favorable auspices, but the foundation cannot yet be said to be laid.



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More laborers must be sent forth. They should be sent out in multitudes if they can be found. They must acquire the language so that they can communicate freely with the people. They must proclaim the message of the Gospel from house to house, in the highways and market-places, wherever they can find an audience,-until converts are multiplied. Schools must be established, and the doctrines of the Gospel be instilled into the minds of the children and youth. We must have a native ministry instructed and trained up from their childhood according to the doctrines of the Gospel before they will be capable of taking the sole charge of this work. Until all this has taken place the churches may not slacken any of their efforts; nay, to accomplish this there must be an increase of effort beyond all that the churches have ever yet put forth.”

During the year 1848 he sent a letter to the Society of Inquiry of the Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

“It is yet a ‘day of small things’ with us. Our work thus far has been chiefly of a preparatory nature. This will probably be the case for some time to come. There have been just enough conversions to teach us that God is with us and will own the instrumentality which He Himself has appointed for the salvation of men, and to encourage us not to faint in our work. We have a vast amount of prejudice and superstition to remove—prejudice and superstition which has been growing and consolidating for forty centuries, and has become an essential ingredient in the character of the people and part of almost every emotion and conception of their minds. At present both officials and people are very friendly, and we are permitted to preach the Gospel without hindrance. But we cannot tell how long this state of things will continue. When the operation of the leaven has become manifest, we must expect opposition. We cannot expect that the great adversary of God and men will relinquish this the strongest hold of his empire on earth, without a mighty struggle. We must yet contend with ‘principalities and, powers and spiritual wickedness in high places.’

### **WORSHIP OF THE EMPEROR.**

“The system of idolatry is as closely connected with the civil government of China, I suppose, as ever it was with ancient Rome. The emperor may be called the great High-priest of the nation. He and he only is permitted to offer sacrifice and direct worship to the Supreme Being. The description which Paul has given of the ‘man of sin,’ with but little variation may be applied to him.

“‘He exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.’ He has arrogated to himself the title which expresses the highest thought of divinity known to the

conceptions of the Chinese mind. He is superior to all gods, except the great Supreme. All others he appoints, designates their business



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and dethrones them at his pleasure. In the city of Amoy is a temple dedicated to the worship of the emperor and containing a tablet as representative of his person. On certain days of the year the officers of government are required to repair to this temple, and offer that religious homage which is due to God alone. Now to remove these prejudices and superstitions and to carry to the final triumph this warfare, which we must wage with those in 'high places,' will not be the work of a few years. We might well despair of ever possessing the land, where such 'sons of Anak' dwell, were it not that the ark of God is with us and His command has been given, 'Go up and possess it.' But we look to you, my brethren, for assistance and reinforcement in this the cause of our common Lord, not only to fill the places of those who fall at their post or are disabled in the conflict, but also that we may extend our lines and conduct the siege with more effect. If you desire a field where you may find scope and employment for every variety of talent, and where you may prove yourselves faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, I know of no place whence can come to you a more urgent call than from this vast empire."

### IV. LIGHT AND SHADE.

#### THE CHIANG-CHIU VALLEY.

Among the jottings in Mr. Talmage's diary for 1847-1848 we find mention of a tour to Chiang-chiu on September 23, 1847, in company with Messrs. Pohlman, Doty and Lloyd.

Chiang-chiu is a large city of 200,000 inhabitants, situated on a wide river, 30 miles west of Amoy. He writes: "Wherever we went we were accompanied by an immense throng of people. The most of them I suppose had never seen a white face. But few Europeans have visited the city. The city has an extensive wall, wider and I think more cleanly streets, and is larger than Amoy. In the rear of the city there are three watch towers. They are situated on very elevated ground. From these we had a very delightful view of the city and surrounding country. The scenery, it seemed to me, was the most beautiful I had ever witnessed. Within the circle of our vision lay that immense city with its extensive walls, its temples and pagoda, its river, bridges and boats, its gardens, its trees and shrubbery, and its densely crowded streets. Surrounding the city was spread out an extensive valley of some ten or fifteen miles in width and some twenty or twenty-five in length, covered with luxuriant vegetation. Through the midst of the valley might be marked the meandering track of the Chiang-chiu river, the whole region beautifully variegated with fruit trees, shade trees, and villages. Still further on, in every direction, our view was bounded by lofty hills whose cloud capped tops seemed as pillars on which the heavens rested. Nature had done her best to make this region a terrestrial paradise."



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On a subsequent trip to Chiang-chiu, Mr. Talmage writes: "The valley of the Chiang-chiu river is one of the most beautiful regions I ever saw. It is densely populated. In every direction are villages, I might almost say without number, rendered most beautiful by their plentiful supply of large banyans and various other trees of luxuriant foliage. The intermediate spaces between the villages are fields covered with vegetation most dense and beautiful. Through the centre of this scene may be traced the course of the river with its numberless canals, like the Nile of Egypt, giving fertility wherever nature or the art of man conducts its waters."

### **BREAKING AND BURNING OF IDOLS.**

"Feb. 27, 1848. Today an old lady and her two sons declared themselves to be worshipers of Jesus by presenting their idols to Bro. Pohlman. On the evening of the last day of their last year they had burnt their ancestral tablets. It was an interesting sight, said Bro. Pohlman, to see the old lady, supported by one of her sons, breaking her idols and making a voluntary and public surrender of them at the chapel.

"March 1st. When the old lady returned from the chapel on Sunday evening she was full of zeal, and began preaching to her neighbors on the folly of idolatry. She was so successful that another old lady living in the same house with her has made a bonfire and burned all her idols except one. This, being made of clay, was not combustible. This she presented to Pohlman today. He asked her whether she gave it up willingly. She said she rejoiced to do it. She said she had not yet destroyed her ancestral tablets. Pohlman told her he did not wish her to do it rashly. She must reflect on the subject, and when she became convinced that the worship of them was a sin against God she must give them up immediately.

"March 29th. This afternoon Bro. Hickok and wife and Bro. Maclay arrived at Amoy on their way to Foochow. They had a long passage from Hongkong, having been out twenty-nine days." The distance from Hongkong to Amoy is less than three hundred miles, and is made in twenty-four hours by an ordinary coast steamer.

### **THE CHINESE BOAT RACE AND ITS ORIGIN.**

"June 5th. Monday. To-day being the fifth day of the fifth month (Chinese), was the festival of dragon boat-racing. Several dragon boats filled with rowers, rather paddlers, were contesting this afternoon in the harbor. The water was thronged with boats filled with Chinese to see the sport. Many of these boats, and almost all the junks in the neighborhood, were decked with green branches, also with streamers flying. The origin of this festival is said to be as follows: In very ancient times one of the first officers, perhaps Prime Minister of government, gave offense to the emperor. The emperor banished him. He was so downcast on account

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of the emperor's displeasure that he went and drowned himself. The emperor afterwards repented of his act, and on inquiry after the man learned that he had drowned himself. He sent out boats in every direction to search for his body, and also to make offerings to his spirit. His body was not found. But from that time to this his body is thus searched for every year and his spirit thus appeased. This celebration is universal throughout the empire and wherever there are colonies of Chinese, throughout the islands of the (East Indian) Archipelago.

"The same good feeling continues to exist at Amoy as formerly. We are on the best of terms, so far as we can judge, with all classes, the officials and people. The mandarins receive our calls and return their cards. All of them but one have visited us at our houses. Some of them call on us quite frequently. This places us on a high vantage ground. The people will not fear to listen to us, attend our meetings, and visit us at our houses, as they would if the mandarins kept aloof from us. The same good feeling towards foreigners seems to extend far into the interior. At least we go from, village to village wherever we please without hindrance, and are always treated with kindness."

### **THE CHINESE BEGGAR SYSTEM.**

"I have to-day been making some inquiries of my teacher concerning the system by which the beggars of Amoy are governed. The truth seems as follows: There are very many beggars in the city. In each ward there is a head-man or chief called 'Chief of the Beggars.' He derives his office from the 'Hai-hong,' or the superior local magistrate. Sometimes the office is conferred as an act of benevolence on an individual, who from sickness or other causes has met with reverses of fortune. Sometimes it is purchased. There being eighteen wards in the city of Amoy, of course there are eighteen such head-men. Their office is not honorable, but there is considerable profit connected with it. The head-men hold their office for life, or until removed for bad behavior. They get certificates of office from the 'Hai-hong,' and on the change of that functionary it is necessary to get the stamp of his successor attached to their certificates. Their income is derived from various sources. Monthly they call on the merchants and shopkeepers, who by paying down a sufficient amount are freed from the annoyance of beggars during the month. If a beggar enters one of these establishments he is pointed to a card which is posted up in some conspicuous place, and is a certificate from the 'chief of the beggars' of that ward that a sufficient amount of beggar money has been paid down for the month. The 'chiefs of the beggars' also receive money from a man or his family when he is about to marry, also from the family of the bride. They also receive money after the death and burial of the parents or any old member of a family; also



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from men who are advanced to literary honors, or who receive official promotion In any of the above cases, if any individual fail to agree with the 'chief of the beggars' of his ward and pay what is considered a sufficient amount of money (the amount varies with the importance of the occasion and the wealth of the parties), he may expect a visit from a posse of beggars, who will give him much annoyance by their continual demands. The 'chiefs of the beggars' give a part of the money which they receive to the beggars under them. My teacher thinks there are about two thousand beggars in the city of Amoy. There is a small district belonging to the city of Amoy called 'The Beggars' Camp.' The most of the inhabitants of this place are beggars. These beggars go about the city seeking a living, clothed in rags and covered with filth and sores, the most disgusting and pitiable objects I ever saw."

### **TWO NOBLE MEN SUMMONED HENCE.**

On the 6th of December Rev. John Lloyd, of the American Presbyterian mission, died of typhus fever after an illness of two weeks. Mr. Talmage makes this record of him:

"Dec. 8, 1848. Rev. John Lloyd was born in the State of Pennsylvania on the first of Oct., 1813, which made him thirty-five years, two months, and five days at the time of his death. He was a man of fine abilities. His mind was well stored with useful knowledge and was well disciplined. He was most laborious in study, very careful to improve his time. He was mastering the language with rapidity. His vocabulary was not so large as that of some of the other brethren, but he had a very large number of words and phrases at his command, and was pronounced by the Chinese to speak the language more accurately than any other foreigner in the place. They even said of him that it could not be inferred simply from his voice, unless his face was seen, that he was a foreigner. He was a man of warm heart, very strong in his friendship, very kind in his disposition, and a universal favorite among the Chinese. I never knew a man that improved more by close intimacy. His modesty, which may be called his great fault, was such that it was necessary to become well acquainted with him before he could be properly appreciated. But it has pleased the Master of the harvest to call him from the field just as he became fully qualified to be an efficient laborer. What a lesson this, that we must not overestimate our importance in the work to which God has called us. He can do without us. It seems necessary that He should give the Church lesson upon lesson that she may not forget her dependence upon Him."

Early in 1849 the brethren were called to mourn the loss of one of the most devoted pioneers of the Amoy mission, the Rev. William J. Pohlman.



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Mr. Talmage writes: "Feb. 8th. On Monday night at twelve o'clock I was called up to receive the sad intelligence that our worst fears in reference to Pohlman were confirmed. He perished on the morning of the 5th or 6th ult. He embarked on the 2d ult. from Hongkong in the schooner Omega. On the morning of probably the 5th, at about two o'clock, she struck near Breaker Point, one hundred and twenty miles from Hongkong. A strong wind was blowing at the time, so that every effort to get the ship off was unavailing. She was driven farther on the sand and fell over on her side. Her long boat and one quarter boat were carried away, and her cabin filled with water. The men on board clung to the vessel until morning. The remaining boat was then lowered. Those of the crew who were able to swim were directed to swim to the shore. The captain, first and second officers, and Pohlman entered the boat and those of the crew who could not swim also received permission to enter. But a general rush was made for the boat, by which it was overturned, and those who could not swim, Pohlman among the number, perished. The captain attempted to reach the shore by swimming, and would have succeeded, but was met by the natives. They were eager for plunder, and seized the captain to plunder him of his clothes. While they were stripping him of his clothes they dragged him through the water with his head under, by which he was drowned. About twenty-five of the crew succeeded in reaching the shore in safety. After being stripped of their clothes, they were permitted to escape. Afterwards, on arriving at a village they were furnished with some rags. After suffering much from fatigue and hunger they arrived at Canton, overland, on the 17th ult. This event has cast gloom again over our small circle. But one month previous to his death, Pohlman with myself had closed the eyes of dear Lloyd. Oh, how deeply we do feel, and shall for a long time feel this loss."

"Feb. 11th. On Sunday afternoon our new church was consecrated to the worship of the only true God, the first building built for this purpose in Amoy. Mr. Young preached the sermon. It was also a funeral sermon for Mr. Pohlman. The house was crowded with people. Very many could not get into the building. There was some noise and confusion. I think the majority, however, were desirous to hear."

In a letter to Drs. Anderson (Dr. Anderson was one of the early Secretaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.) and De Witt, speaking of Pohlman's death, he says:

"Our hearts bleed. God has seen fit to send upon us stroke after stroke. Oh, when will He stay His hand? But we will not murmur. It is God who hath done this. His ways are inscrutable. We gaze upon them in mute astonishment. We may quote as peculiarly applicable to our present circumstances the remarks which this brother made at the grave of him who was called away a month previous. 'Death,'



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said he, 'is always a sad event, and is often peculiarly distressing. It is so in the instance before us. There is a sad breach in our little circle at this station. Situated as we are here, every member of our small society tells upon the happiness of the whole. Our number is limited and less than a score. We have few bosom friends, few to cheer and encourage us, few to whom to tell our sorrows and our joys. Here we are far away from those we love, away from dear friends and kindred and those tender associations which make society so delightful at home. Hence we feel deeply any breach made in our little circle. In proportion as our number is diminished in the same proportion is there a decrease in the endearments of friendship and love. More especially is this the case when the departed was possessed of social virtues and qualified to make all around him agreeable and happy. We mourn also for these poor deluded heathen. They have sustained an incalculable loss. I feel it impossible to give an adequate description of his character. He felt that in laboring for the heathen he was engaged in a work of the highest moment. Thereto he bent every energy of mind and body. That which, by receiving the word of God, we are made theoretically to acknowledge, by the dispensations of His Providence-we are made practically to feel, that man is nothing-that God is All in All.'

"God's dealings with this mission would seem to be enough to arouse our Church. Heretofore He has given success to His servants. He has given us favor with the authorities and with the people. The Church has seemed to be satisfied with this. She has thanked God for His smiles, but has made little effort to increase the number of her laborers as fast as the demand for them increased. Now God is trying another plan. Her laborers are dying off and the question comes to her, not merely whether she will advance or not, but, whether she will retain that which she has already gained. She has volunteered in a glorious warfare. Will she hold the positions she has won, and make further conquests, or will she permit her soldiers to die at their posts without being replaced, and thus retire from the field? Important interests are at stake. The honor of our Church is at stake. The salvation of souls is at stake. It is a crisis with our mission. We cannot endure the thought that the labors of those faithful servants who have been called home shall be in a great measure lost by neglect. We have received lately impressive lessons of the uncertainty of human life. The thought steals over us that we, too, are liable at any moment to be cut down in the midst of our labors. This liability is increased by the amount of labor which necessarily devolves upon us. Now we are only two in number. As for myself I am only beginning to stammer in this difficult language. This, too, in a field where there is labor enough to be done to employ all the men you can send us. You will not think it strange then that we plead earnestly.



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“Our new church edifice was completed soon after Brother Pohlman left for Hongkong. As he had done so much of the work in gathering the congregation and had originated the idea of the building and had watched its erection with so much interest, we were desirous that he should be present at its consecration. We therefore delayed opening the building for worship until we received the definite news of his death.”

In an address on “Reminiscences of Missionaries and Mission Work,” delivered by Dr. Talmage during his later years, he refers to the early missionaries at Amoy in these words:

“The men God gave the Church were just the men needed to awaken her missionary spirit and shape her mission work. So for laying the foundation and shaping the plan of the structure He would have us erect at Amoy He gave us three men, just the men needed for the work,-David Abeel, William J. Pohlman and Elihu Doty. The more I meditate on what they said and wrote and did and suffered in the early days of that work, and see whereunto it is growing, the more am I impressed with the fact that they were wonderful men, just the men for the time, place, and circumstances, and therefore evidently God’s gift.

“Dr. Abeel was the pioneer of the Amoy Mission. During the greater part of the years of his manhood, he struggled with disease, and his whole life on earth was comparatively short, yet the Lord enabled him to accomplish more work than most men accomplish during a much longer life. His last field of labor was Amoy, entering it in January, 1842, when the port had just been thrown open and while the British army was still there, and leaving it in January, 1845. In that short time, notwithstanding interruptions from sickness and of voyages in search of health, or rather to stave off death till others were ready to take his place, he laid a good foundation, doing a work that told and was lasting. I met him only once. It was at his father’s house in New Brunswick, after his work at Amoy-after all his public work was done and he was only waiting to be summoned home. When I afterwards went to Amoy, I found his name very fragrant, not only among Europeans and Americans, but also among the Chinese. He had baptized none, but a goodly number of those afterwards baptized had received their first impressions concerning Christianity and their first instructions therein from him.”

“Messrs. Doty and Pohlman with their families came from Borneo to Amoy, arriving in June, 1844, about six months before Dr. Abeel was compelled to leave. We have heard of places so healthy, that it is said there was difficulty to find material wherewith to start cemeteries. Amoy, rather Kolongsu, where all the Europeans then resided, in those days was not such a place. It is said that of all the foreign residents only one escaped the prevailing fever. The mortality was very great. In a year and a half from the time of their arrival at Amoy, Mr. Doty

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was on his way to the United States with two of his own and two of Mr. Pohlman's little ones. The other members of their families—the mothers and the children, all that was mortal of them—were lying in the Mission cemetery on Kolongsu; and to 'hold the fort,' so far as our Mission was concerned, Pohlman was left alone, and well he held it. He had a new dialect to acquire, yet when health allowed, he daily visited his little mission chapel, and twice on the Sabbath, to preach the Gospel of Christ. He was a man of work, of great activity. When I arrived at Amoy in 1847, he was suffering from ophthalmia. Much of his reading and writing had to be done for him by others. I was accustomed to read to him an hour in the morning from six to seven. Another read to him an hour at noon from twelve to one. He was still subject to occasional attacks of the old malarial fever. Besides all this he was now alone in the world, his whole family gone, two of his little ones in his native land, then very much farther away from China than now, and the others, mother and children, sleeping their last sleep.

"Yet he was the life of our little mission company. Do you ask why? He lived very close to God, and therefore was enabled to bow to the Divine will, to use his own language, 'with sweet submission.' Pohlman's term of service, too, was short. He was called away in his thirty-seventh year. His work at Amoy was less than five years. It, too, much of it, was foundation work, though he was permitted to see the walls just beginning to rise. Two of the first converts were baptized by him, and many others received from him their early Christian instruction. The first, and still by far the best church-building at Amoy, which is also the first church building erected in China expressly for Chinese Protestant Christian worship, may be called his monument. It was specially in answer to his appeal that the money, \$3,000, was contributed. It was under his supervision that the building was erected. To it he gave very much toil and care. The house was nearly ready when he took his last voyage to Hongkong, and he was hastening back to dedicate it when God took him. His real monument, however is more precious and lasting than church-buildings, as precious and lasting as the souls he was instrumental in saving, and the spiritual temple whose foundation he helped to lay. There were many who remembered him with very warm affection long after he was gone. Among them I remember one, an old junk captain, who in his later years, speaking of heaven, was wont to say, 'I shall see Teacher Pohlman there; I shall see Teacher Pohlman there.'"

## V. AT THE FOOT OF THE BAMBOOS

The sad and sudden departure of Mr. Pohlman so affected a maiden sister, Miss Pohlman, then at Amoy, as to unsettle her mind and necessitate an immediate return to the United States. No lady friend could accompany her. It was decided that Mr. Talmage take passage on the same ship and act as guardian and render what assistance he could. The ship arrived at New York August 23, 1849.



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Mr. Talmage made an extensive tour on behalf of Missions in China among the Reformed churches in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

“Jan. 15, 1850. Was married at twelve M. in First Presbyterian Church at Elizabeth, New Jersey, by Dr. N. Murray, to Miss Abby F. Woodruff. Started immediately with my wife on a trip to Seneca County, New York.”

“March 16, 1850. In the forenoon accompanied by many dear friends we embarked on board the ship Tartar from New York bound for China.”

“July 16th. Arrived safely at Amoy, for which our hearts are full of gratitude to Him who has watched over us on the deep and conducted us safely through every danger.”

Though the entire Reformed Mission at Amoy then consisted of only three members, Mr. Doty and Mr. and Mrs. Talmage, still they believed in colonizing. Mr. Talmage secured a Chinese house and shop a mile or more away from the original headquarters and this became the missionary's home and preaching place. It was on the north side of the city in a densely populated neighborhood known as “Tek-chhiu-Kha,” or “At the Foot of the Bamboos.”

It fronted one of the main thoroughfares of the city. It was near the water's edge at the mooring-place of junks from the many-peopled districts of Tong-an and Lam-an. The house and shop were renovated and capped with another story. Here Mr. Talmage prayed and studied and preached and planned for nearly twenty years. On this spot today stands a flourishing Chinese church.

In a letter to Drs. Anderson and De Witt, dated Dec. 17, 1850, Mr. Talmage thus describes their new home:

“Our house is pleasantly situated, having a good view of the inner part of the harbor, and of several small islands in the harbor. We also have a pleasant view of the mainland beyond the harbor. From our house we can count a number of villages on the mainland, beautifully situated among large banyans. We hope the situation will prove a healthy one. I like the situation most of all because I think it well adapted to our work. We are near the northern extreme of the city along the water's edge, while the other missionaries are near the southern extreme. Thus on entering the harbor from Quemoy and other islands, near the mouth of the harbor or from the cities and villages on the seacoast, the first foreign residence at Amoy, which meets the eye, is the residence of missionaries. On coming to Amoy from the cities and villages which are inland, again the first foreign residence which meets the eye is the residence of missionaries. We are in a part of the city where the Gospel has not yet been preached.”

In the same letter he refers to the Opium habit—and to the initiatory steps toward the formation of a Romanized alphabet for the Amoy Vernacular. The Chinese character is



learned with great difficulty. It requires years of close application. In Southern Fukien not more than one man in a hundred can read intelligently. It is doubtful whether one woman in ten thousand can.



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Protestant Christianity wants men to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. It urges our Lord's command, "Search the Scriptures." It demands not only the hearing ear, but the reading eye.

Hence this early effort on the part of the missionaries to prepare a version of the Scriptures and a Christian literature in a form more readily learned by the people. Those early efforts were doubtful experiments even to some of the missionaries. The Chinese converts at first looked quite askance at what appeared to them an effort to supersede their highly venerated Chinese character.

The Romanized system was gradually perfected. The Chinese were gradually disabused of their prejudices. To-day the most ardent advocates of the system are Chinese pastors and elders. The whole Bible has been translated into Amoy Romanized colloquial. An extensive literature adapted to Christian homes and Christian schools has grown up through the years and is contributing to the strength and progress of the Chinese Church to-day.

### **OPIUM.**

"Independent of the reproach which the opium traffic casts on the Christian religion, we find it a great barrier in the way of evangelizing this people. We cannot put confidence in an opium smoker. A man who smokes it in even the smallest degree we should not dare to admit into the Christian church. More than one-half of the men at Amoy are more or less addicted to the habit. Of this half of the population the missionary can have comparatively but little hope. We know the grace of God can deliver from every vice and there have been examples of reformation even from this. Yet from experience when talking to an opium smoker we always feel discouraged. Although this be a discouraging feature in our operations here, it should only be a stimulus to the Church to send more laborers and put forth greater efforts to stem the tide of destruction which the Christian world is pouring in upon the heathen. Independent of the principles of benevolence, justice demands of Christendom that the evil be stayed, and reparation if possible be made for the injury already done. If nothing more, let there be an equivalent for what has been received from China. It is a startling fact, that the money which Christian nations have received from China for this one article, an article which has done to the Chinese nothing but incalculable injury, far, far exceeds all the money which has been expended by all Protestant churches on all Protestant missions in all parts of the heathen world since the days of the Reformation.

### **ROMANIZED COLLOQUIAL.**



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“The question whether there is any way by which this people can be made a reading people, especially by which the Christians may be put in possession of the Word of God, and be able to read it intelligently for themselves, has occupied much thought of the missionaries here. At present most of the church members have no reading for the Sabbath and for private meditation. They may have family worship, but they cannot at their worship read the Holy Scriptures. Some of us are now trying an experiment whether by means of the Roman alphabet the Sacred Scriptures and other religious books may not be given to the Christians and to any others who cannot read, but who take enough of an interest in Christianity to desire to read the Scriptures for themselves. By the use of seventeen of these letters we can express every consonant and vowel sound in the Amoy dialect, and by the use of a few additional marks we can designate all the tones. Dr. James Young, an English Presbyterian missionary physician, has commenced teaching the colloquial, as written with the Roman alphabet, in his school, a school formerly under the care of Mr. Doty. From his present experience he is of opinion that boys who are at all apt in acquiring instruction, in less than three months may be prepared for reading the Scriptures, with understanding. I have a class of three or four adults an hour an evening four evenings in the week, receiving instruction in the colloquial. They have taken some half dozen lessons and are making good progress. At present we have no printed primers or spelling-books, and are compelled to teach principally by blackboard. We are of opinion that almost every member of the church can soon learn to read by this system. Arrangements have been made to print part of the history of Joseph in colloquial. These are but experiments. If they succeed according to our present hope, it may be worth while to have the whole Bible and other religious books printed in this manner. A little more experience will enable us to speak with more confidence for or against the plan.”

“Dec. 23. Yesterday morning my chapel was opened, according to appointment. I preached to the people my first regular sermon from the text, ‘There is one God and one Mediator,’ *etc.* The room was crowded. It will seat about one hundred comfortably.”

### **CHINESE SENSE OF SIN.**

March 17, 1851. To his brother, Goyn.

“I think the Chinese are very different in their religious feelings from many other (perhaps from the most of other) heathen people. We have often heard of the great sacrifices which the heathen of India will make and the great sufferings they will impose on themselves in order to make atonement for their sins and appease the anger of the gods. There may occasionally be something of the kind among the Buddhists of China. But I rather suppose that where there are any self-mortifications imposed



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(which is very rare in this part of China), they are imposed to secure merit, not to atone for sin. I do not remember ever to have met with an individual among the Chinese who had any sense of sinfulness of heart, or even any remorse for sinfulness of conduct except he was first taught it by the Gospel. It is one of the most difficult truths to convey to their minds that they are sinners against God. We have had a few inquirers who have expressed a deep sense of sinfulness. But this sense of sinfulness has come from hearing the Gospel. The way the most of those, whom we doubt not are true Christians, have been led on seems to be as follows: They hear the Gospel, presently they become convinced of its truth. Their first impulses then seem to be those of joy and gratitude. They are like men who were born blind, and had never mourned over their blindness, because they had no notion of the blessing of sight. Presently their eyes begin to be opened and they begin to see. They only think of the new blessings which they are receiving, not of the imperfections which still remain in their vision. A sense of these comes afterwards. Was not this sometimes the case in the days of the apostles? It was not so on the day of Pentecost. The multitude were 'pricked in their hearts' because the moment they were convinced that Jesus was the Christ they were filled with a sense of their wickedness in crucifying Him. So it is with persons in Christian lands when their minds become interested in the truth; they are made to feel their wickedness in so long resisting its influences. But the case seems to have been different when Philip first carried the Gospel to Samaria. The first effect there seems to have been that of 'great joy.'

"It seems to be thus in Amoy. The conviction of deep sinfulness comes by meditating on the Gospel, the work of Christ, *etc.*

"It is the doctrine of the cross of Christ, after all, which should be the theme of our discourses."

March 18, 1851. To his brother, Goyn.

"They say in regard to preaching, that when a man has nothing more to say he had better stop. If this rule were carried out in conversation and letter-writing, there would be much less said and written in the world, than is now the case.

"You seem to think that we missionaries can sit down at any time and write letters, always having enough matter that will be interesting to you at home. This is a good theory enough, but facts do not always bear it out.

"Our missionary work moves on usually in the same steady manner without many ups and downs or interesting episodes (rather a mixture of figures you will say), which we think worthy of note. I wish you folks at home could send us more men to drive on the work a little faster. The door of access at Amoy still continues as wide open as ever,

and now seems to be the time for the Church to send her men and occupy the post, which the Master offers to her. But the Church at home cannot, it seems, look at this matter as we who are on the ground....



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### PRIMITIVE LAMPS

“We have no good lamps yet for the church, consequently cannot open it in the evening. But I have prepared some lamps for my chapel. I think you would laugh to see them. They are four in number. Two of them are merely small tumblers hung up by wires and cords. By means of another wire a wick is suspended in each tumbler and the tumbler filled with oil. The other two are on the same principle, but the tumblers are hung in a kind of glass globe which is suspended by brass chains. These look considerably more ornamental than the first two. Whether you laugh at them or not, they answer a very good purpose. They do not make the room as light as would be required in a church, in as large a city as Amoy is, in the United States, but by means of them my chapel is open on Sunday evenings and on every other evening in the week except one. The church and chapel are both open almost every afternoon in the week, and sometimes in the mornings. One, two, three, or more of the converts are always ready to hold forth almost every afternoon and evening. Besides this, they go to other thoroughfares frequently and preach the Gospel as well as they are able. For much of the work these converts are perhaps better adapted than ourselves. They understand the superstitions of the people in their practical working, better than we probably will ever be able to learn them.”

### ZEALOUS CONVERTS.

“April 14, 1851. There are now in connection with our church thirteen converts. In connection with the church of the London brethren there are eight. Two of our members, although compelled to labor with their hands for the sustenance of themselves and their families, yet devote the afternoons and evenings of almost every day in the week, in making known the way of salvation to their countrymen. They spend the Sabbath also, only omitting their labors long enough to listen to the preaching of the missionary and to partake of their noonday meal, from early in the morning until bedtime, in the same way, publishing the Gospel to their countrymen.”

### THE TERM QUESTION.

It was at this time that the translation of the Bible into the Classic Chinese Version, or “Delegates’ Version” as it was afterwards called, was going on. A long and heated controversy had arisen as to the proper terms in the Chinese language to be used in translation of the words “God” and “Spirit.” Missionaries in different parts of the empire took most opposite views and held them with the greatest tenacity. The Missionary Boards and Bible Societies in Great Britain and America were deeply interested spectators. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the American Bible Society became participators. On what they considered satisfactory

evidence they declared in favor of certain Chinese words and characters to be used in preaching the Gospel and in translating the Scriptures. They advised their missionaries and Bible distributors of their decision.

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The missionaries at Amoy, Messrs. John and Alexander Stronach, London Mission, and Messrs. Doty and Talmage, had very strong convictions on this subject. Their views agreed. Rev. John Stronach was one of the Committee who prepared the "Delegates' Version." The views of the brethren at Amoy were diametrically opposed to the decisions of the American Board and American Bible Society. In a long letter of eighty four pages, addressed to Drs. Anderson and De Witt, Oct. 31, 1851, Mr. Talmage sets forth their side of the question. No man can read that document, weighty with learning and charged with moral earnestness, but must feel the profoundest respect for the writer, however he may dissent from his arguments. He concludes as follows:

"Such are our views concerning the use of the words 'Shin' and 'Ling' as translations of the words 'God' and 'Spirit.' While we hold ourselves open to conviction, if it can be proved that we are wrong, we at present hold these views firmly. We may not have succeeded in convincing the Prudential Committee that our views are correct, yet we trust we have convinced them that we have given due attention to the subject. We now ask, Can the Prudential Committee expect of us, while we hold such views, to conform to their decision? Would they respect us if we did? We could not respect ourselves. If we could thus trifle with conscientious views on subjects of such importance, we certainly should regard ourselves as being unworthy to be called missionaries of the A. B. C. F. M. or any other Protestant association, and we think the Prudential Committee would also lose confidence in us. We now feel called upon to state our views in reference to the propriety of the various missionary societies and Bible societies and other institutions deciding for us what terms we shall use and what terms we shall not use in preaching the Gospel to the heathen. We shall state our views with the utmost kindness and with all due deference to those from whom we differ. We cannot doubt that the Prudential Committee are willing also and desire us to state our views with the utmost frankness. If our views are incorrect, we desire that others use the same freedom in pointing out our errors. Our views are these:—The societies in the United States and England are not called upon, at least at the present time, to decide this question for us. Those societies which have made such decision have acted prematurely. In deciding this question authoritatively, they are assuming a responsibility which we think they are not called upon to assume. This responsibility belongs properly to the missionaries, and they, we say it with all due respect, are much better qualified to bear this responsibility; for they are better qualified to judge of the evidence and discover the truth in the case. If they are not, then they are not qualified to be missionaries. But whether better qualified or not, they are accountable to a higher power than that



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of any society under whose patronage they may labor. Whatever be the decision of such society, they are still bound, in preaching the Gospel, to conform to their conscientious views of truth. The only way to produce agreement among Protestant missionaries is not by authoritative decisions or even by compromise, but by producing evidence sufficient to convince the judgment. We must have evidence. In selecting men for China or any other heathen field, missionary societies should first examine whether they have mental ability to acquire the language of the people to whom they are going. If they are deficient in this respect they should not be sent, and if missionaries on the ground are found deficient in this respect they should be recalled.”

The “term question” has not been settled to this day.

Jan. 22, 1852. To Dr. Anderson.

“I made another effort to extend our influence by going out towards evening into the streets and selecting eligible situations from which to preach to those who would assemble. In this manner I often had opportunity to publish the glad tidings more widely than we can do in our houses of worship. I found much encouragement in this work. If we had the physical strength we might thus preach day after day, from morning to night, and find multitudes ready to listen.”

### **WHAT IT COSTS A CHINESE TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN.**

In the same letter, speaking of ten converts received, he says: “One of them was gaining a mere living from the profits of a small shop, in which he sold paper and candles to be used in idolatrous worship. As he became acquainted with the Gospel, he soon found that his business was opposed to the doctrines of Christianity. A hard contest ensued, but the power of the Gospel finally triumphed. He gave up his business and with it his only prospect of making a livelihood and for some months had no other prospect before him and his family but beggary or starvation, except such a hope as God afforded. Another held a small office of government, the requirements of which were inconsistent with obedience to the Gospel, but the perquisites of which were his only means of sustaining his family, including an aged father. In his case the conflict seemed yet more fearful and lasted a much longer time. We hoped that the truth had taken a deep hold on him, but we began to tremble for the result. The love of Christ, as we trust, finally gained the victory. He gave up his office, gave up his living, gave up the world, that he might find the salvation of his soul and confess Christ before men. So also with the most of the others. They were called to sacrifice their worldly prospects, in order to embrace the Gospel. Christians in our beloved land hardly know what it is to

take up the cross and follow Christ. The ridicule and obloquy with which they meet, if indeed they meet with any, is not a tithe of that to which the native



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convert here is exposed. Besides, they are seldom called to suffer much temporal loss for the sake of Christ, but it is very different with him. If he belong to the literary class, he must give up all hope of preferment. If he be in the employ of the government, he may expect to be deprived of his employment, if indeed he be not compelled to give it up from conscientious motives. If he be a shopkeeper, his observance of the Lord's day will probably deprive him of many of his customers, and if he be in the employ of others the same reason will render it very difficult for him to retain his situation."

### PERSECUTED FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.

April 6, 1852. To his brother, Goyn.

"I promised to give some account of the young man who was baptized on the Sabbath before the last. His name is Khi (pronounced like the letter 'X' of the Greek alphabet). Early last year I noticed a young man who began to be quite regular in attending service at my chapel. I inquired of him where he lived and why he came. He said he was employed in burning lime at a lime-kiln not far off from my house. That I had met him in the street and invited him to come to the chapel. Of this I remembered nothing, but I often thus invite persons to come and hear the Gospel. He said he came in consequence of that invitation. But having heard the doctrine, he found it to be good, and had embraced it. This man has since been baptized. I soon learned that he had been persuading his fellow-workmen to come along with him. One of these workmen was Khi. He soon determined to obey the doctrines of the Scriptures. One of these doctrines brought him into immediate collision with his employer. This doctrine was, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' He refused to work on the Sabbath day. His employer told him if he did not work he would discharge him. Khi was not to be moved from his determination and was finally dismissed. After a few ineffectual efforts to get employment, he returned to visit his father's family; They reside a day's journey from Amoy. While home he was taken ill. It was two or three months before he returned again to Amoy. When he came back I conversed with him concerning his conduct while away. He had as yet but little knowledge of the doctrines of the Bible. But I was much gratified at the simplicity of piety which his narration manifested. He had not only endeavored to serve God himself, but had endeavored to persuade others also to turn unto God. After his return, all his efforts to get employment failed. I spoke to a mason who has done much work for us, and who employs many workmen, and requested him to employ Khi for the carrying of bricks and mortar and such work, if he had an opening for him. He consented to do so and employed him for a short time. But Khi's fellow workmen did not like his religion and succeeded in getting him discharged. In consequence of the dampness of the climate, it is not safe for



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foreigners to live on the first floor. We always live above stairs. Therefore I have rooms in the lower part of my house unoccupied. Khi asked me if he might sleep in one of these rooms. I of course consented. He had no bed or bedding. I had some empty boxes in the room. He put these together, and laid some straw and a straw mat on them for his bed. After he was discharged by the mason, he endeavored to make a living by carrying potatoes about the street for sale. His profits were from two to four cents a day. He made no complaint. He lived on potatoes. Winter came on; he had no means of buying clothing, or better food. The consequence was that he became ill. The room in which he slept was directly under my study. Almost every night I would hear his voice engaged in prayer, before he retired to his straw. Sometimes he would pray for a long, long time. The first thing in the morning again I would hear his voice in prayer. I knew that he was destitute, but as he never complained, I knew not how great his destitution was, and did not dare to help him lest it would throw out inducements for others to profess Christianity. We are continually compelled to guard against this danger. Many of these poor people would profess Christianity for the sake of a living. One Sabbath evening I heard his voice in prayer, much earlier than usual, and therefore it attracted particular attention. Presently word came to me that Khi was ill. I went down to see him. It made my heart bleed to see a fellow-creature in such destitution, one, moreover, who I hoped was a brother in Christ Jesus. I had had no idea that his destitution was so great. He seemed to be suffering under a severe attack of colic. On inquiry as to how he usually fared, I did not wonder that he was ill. I gave him a little medicine, took means to get him warm and he was soon relieved.

“I then had some good food prepared for him. I was peculiarly struck with the meekness and patience wherewith he bore his sufferings. There was not a murmuring word from his lips, but many words of an opposite character. The next day I called him into my study to give him a little money with which to buy clothing and food. But I had great difficulty in persuading him to take it. He said his sufferings were of no consequence. They were much less than he deserved. The sufferings of this world were all only for a short time. They were sent upon us to teach us not to love the world. Much more he said to this effect. I had to call upon one of the native converts to intercede with him, before he would take the money. But I must not dwell on this subject longer. From what I have said about our missionary work, you will understand why the missionary loves his work and why he would not leave it for any other work, unless duty compels him.”

*“He is only A beggar.”*

Nov. 27, 1852. To the Sunday-school of the Reformed Church at Bound Brook, New Jersey.



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“There is very much poverty and misery among the heathen. They do not pity each other and love each other as some Christians do. Those who have the comforts of life seem to have very little pity for those who are destitute. Therefore they have no poorhouses where the poor may be taken care of. Consequently very many steal, very many beg, and very many starve to death. In going from my house to church on the Sabbath I have counted more than thirty beggars on the streets. The most of them were such pitiable looking objects as you never saw. I have seen persons who are called beggars in the United States, but I never saw a real beggar till I came to Amoy. Some of them are covered with filth and a few filthy rags. Some of them are without eyes, some without noses, some without hands, and some without feet. Some crawl upon their hands and feet, some sit down in the streets and shove themselves along, and some lie down and can only move along by rolling over and over. On Sunday before last, while I was preaching, a blind girl came into the chapel. She was led by a string attached to a boy going before her. He could see, but could not walk. He crept along on his hands and knees. A month or two ago, during a cold storm, late in the evening, just as I was going to bed, I heard some one groaning by my front door. I went out to see what was the matter. I found an old man with white beard lying in the mud and water, and with very little clothing. He was shivering from cold. He was unable to speak. I had him carried into my house, and covered over with some mats. We prepared some warm drink and food for him, as speedily as possible, hoping that thus we might save his life. But before we could get it ready he died. He had probably been carried by some persons and laid at my door to die, that they might be free from the trouble and expense of burying him.

“A week or two ago when walking through the streets I saw a beggar lying a little distance off. I inquired whether he was already dead. Some men, who stood near, said ‘Yes.’ I then asked why they did not bury him. ‘Oh, he is of no use.’ I inquired, ‘Is he not a man?’ ‘No,’ they said, ‘he is only a beggar.’ ‘But,’ I asked again, ‘is he not still a man?’ They laughed and answered, ‘Yes.’ A few days after, walking with Mrs. Talmage by the same place, we saw another beggar lying nearly in the same spot. I inquired of the persons who were near whether he was dead. They answered, ‘Yes.’ Close by sat a beggar who was still alive. He was scarcely grown up. But his face was so deformed from suffering that we could not guess his age. He held out his hands for alms. We gave him a few cash and went on. The next day we passed that way again. We saw two beggars lying together, both dead. We went to them. One was the lad to whom we gave the cash the day previous. On Sunday in coming from church we again passed by that sad spot, and there was still another beggar lying dead directly in the road. This gives you, in part, a picture of what heathenism is.”



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Parts of two letters written in 1852 to his sister Catharine will prove interesting.

### **PRINTING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.**

“Our work here is continually growing on our hands. Besides our usual missionary work, I do a little teaching, a little book-making, and a little printing. You did not know, perhaps, that I am a printer. We are teaching a few persons to read the colloquial (or spoken) language of Amoy. But in order to teach this, it is necessary that this spoken language be committed to writing. It is necessary to have books printed in it. We have no printing press at Amoy. I have had some types cut on bone or horn. With these I print a copy. This is handed to the carver. He pastes it upside down on a block and carves the words on the block. This block is then inked and is made to print other copies. It is a slow process, but the only one we have at Amoy at present. I have thus prepared a spelling-book in the Amoy colloquial. It is not all completed yet. The carver is busy with the last two or three sheets. A few of the first sheets were struck off some weeks ago and made up into small books, which we have been using to teach those who are learning to read, until the whole book is complete. Our printing is not very pretty. When the caners get more experienced in their work, they will be able to do their part better. Our plan of teaching is as follows: On Monday afternoon we have a meeting for women at our house. Before and after the service we teach them (those of them who wish to learn) to spell. On Tuesday afternoon, Mrs. Doty meets those who wish to learn, in a room connected with the church. On Wednesday, Mrs. Doty has a meeting for women at her house. She also spends a little time then in teaching them. On Friday, Abby and I go to the church and spend about an hour in teaching. We cannot expect them to make very rapid progress in this manner of teaching, but it is the best we can do for them at present. There are two little girls who have been coming to our house every day for more than a month. They are beginning to read.”

“I must tell you a little of what I have been doing to-day. This forenoon, among other things, I doctored a Yankee clock. I bought it in Amoy nearly a year ago for three dollars. Sometimes it goes, and sometimes it stands still. But it stands still much more than it goes. This morning I took it all apart, every wheel out, rubbed each wheel off, and put the clock together again. It has been running ever since, but how long it will continue to run, I cannot tell.

### **CARRIER PIGEONS.**



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“Our cook, ‘Lo,’ takes care of our pigeons. Some have died and a few have been stolen, but they have continued gradually to increase. They now number twenty. They are very pretty, and very tame. They spend much of the time on the open veranda in front of our house. Some of them are of a dark brown color, some are perfectly white, some are black and white. We shall soon have enough to begin eating pigeon pies, but I suppose we shall be loth to kill the pretty birds. Some of them are of the Carrier pigeon species. We might take them to a good distance from Amoy and they would doubtless find their way home again. The Chinese have a small whistle which they sometimes fasten on the back of the pigeons near the tail. ‘Lo’ has some attached to some of our pigeons. When they fly swiftly through the air, you can hear the whistle at a great distance. The noise often reminds us of the whistle of a locomotive.

“The gold-fish in the lamp continue much as when I wrote before. We have made some additions to our flower-pots and flowers this spring. Our open veranda is being turned into a sort of open garden. We now have from sixty to seventy pots, from the size of a barrel down to the size of a two-quart measure. Some of them are empty and some of them are not. Besides flowers, we have parsley, onions, peppers, mint, *etc.*, *etc.* Our garden does not flourish as well as it would, if I had time to attend to it. Besides this, the pigeons are very fond of picking off the young sprouts. Lest you should think us too extravagant, I ought to tell you the cost of the flower-pots. Those which were presented to us, did not cost us anything. Those we bought, cost from a cent apiece to sixpence. Some two or three cost as high as fifteen or twenty cents apiece. But you will never understand how nice and how odd we have it, unless you step in some day to look for yourself.”

## VI. THE “LITTLE KNIFE” INSURRECTION

China has maintained her integrity as an empire for hundreds of years. But not without struggle. There have been rebellions and dynastic overthrows that threatened to cleave the empire to its foundations. Indeed rebellion has often had the sanction of religion in China. Let a government be unsuccessful; let a dynasty see the gaunt hand of famine, or the poison hand of pestilence laid on the land, that is the mute voice of Heaven speaking against those who rule. And what nobler than to be self-chosen executors of Heaven’s vengeance. Green-eyed envy in imperial pavilion and courtrooms has often stood sponsor to the wildest lawlessness. A base and extortionate government has often driven men in sheer self-defence to tearing down yamens and hunting down the “tiger” mandarin.



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The present Manchu dynasty seized the Dragon throne in 1644. For one hundred and fifty years China enjoyed comparative peace and prosperity. The emperor Kang-hi and his grandson Keenlung, each reigned sixty years, to the Chinese a manifest token of Heaven's favor. The past one hundred years have been troublous. There has been internal strife. There have been momentous issues to settle in the opening of China's gates to the outside world. When she needed Emperors of the broadest statesmanship, she has had to blunder along with mediocre men or bend an unwilling neck under the sway of puppets. Had it not been for her great Prime Ministers, such as Prince Kung and Li Hung Chang, the days would have been fuller of dark-presaging omens and their disastrous fulfillment.

The beginning of this century found a secret society in existence known as the "Triads," whose avowed object was the expulsion of the Manchus and the restoration of the Mings. In 1803 the emperor Kiaking was attacked in open day while being carried in a chair of state through the streets of Peking. He was saved by his attendants, several of whom lost their lives.

In 1851 the Tai-ping Rebellion began. The fuel that fed the flame was various. It was reaction against oppressive government. It was iconoclasm inspired by a spurious Christianity. It was pride of race that would not tolerate a Manchu on the throne. For fourteen years China staggered under this awful scourge. Whole provinces were devastated and almost depopulated. For a long time the issue was uncertain. At length the united strength of foreigners and Chinese battered the serpent's head and destroyed its vitals.

While the boa of rebellion was stretching itself across the heart of the empire a whole brood of little serpents were poisoning and devouring other outlying provinces. An insurrection was organized in the neighborhood of Amoy early in 1853. Mr. Talmage writes fully concerning it.

### **THE "LITTLE KNIFE" INSURRECTION.**

Jan. 25, 1853. To the Sunday-school, Flushing, New York.

"The streets of Amoy are very narrow. The widest are only a few yards wide. At very short distances apart, there are gates across the streets. The object of these gates, and the principal cause of the streets being so narrow, are to protect the inhabitants from gangs of thieves. In the winter season, when men have more leisure and more temptation to plunder, these gates are closed every night. During the present winter the people seem to have had more fear of robbers than usual. Old gates have been repaired and many new gates have been built. The inhabitants of a Christian land, like America, do not fear to live alone in the country without any near neighbors. But in this region a house standing alone in the country is scarcely ever seen. The people always



collect together in villages or towns or cities. The villages are usually provided with small watchtowers, built of stone or brick, in which a few men may sleep as sentinels to give notice of the approach of robbers, and to fire on them. Even in the towns and cities you seldom see a dwelling-house with an outside window. If there be such a window, it is usually guarded by slabs of granite, or by mason-work with only small openings, like the windows of a prison, so that a person cannot pass through.”



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June 3, 1853. To Dr. Anderson.

“In March last one of the members of our church, Chheng-choan, requested that he might be sent in company with the colporteur on a trip to the city of Chiangchui to preach the Gospel and distribute tracts. He said that his heart was very ardent to go and make known the Gospel. He was willing to give the time and bear his own expenses. He is a native of the city of Chiangchui.”

“They made two visits, one in company with Rev. W. C. Burns. Many of the people requested them to establish a permanent place. Houses were offered them for rent. A few days after their return to Amoy two men who had been much interested in their preaching came down and spent several days with us in order that they might learn the way of the Lord more perfectly.”

“On the 3d of May we called a meeting of the male members of our church, to take into consideration the subject of immediately sending two of their number to Chiangchui, to commence permanent operations. The members were unanimous in the opinion that the Master had opened the way before us, and was calling us to go forward. It was decided that if two men qualified for the work would volunteer, they should immediately be sent. It was then suggested that if two more men were ready perhaps it would be well to appoint them for the region north of us, to carry the Gospel to the villages and towns between Amoy and Chinchew and see whether the way might not be open to begin operations in that city. Chinchew is an important city near the seacoast, about one-third of the way from Amoy to Foochow. The suggestion concerning the appointment of men for Chinchew was new to us. Everything seemed favorable for adopting the new suggestion. Four men immediately offered themselves for the work, two for Chiangchui, and two for the region of Chinchew. They were men whom we thought well qualified for the work, probably just the men we would have chosen.

“The evangelist U, and the colporteur Lotia, left Amoy on their mission to Chiangchui, May 12th. A few days after their arrival, about midnight on the 17th of May, the insurrection broke at Chiangchui, which interrupted their labors. The evangelist thought that quiet would soon be restored and therefore resolved to remain a few days. The people rushed upon the insurgents, wrested their arms from them, and slew many of them. The insurgents finding themselves overpowered attempted to flee. The gates of the streets were closed against them. The people along the streets attacked them by throwing missiles from the tops of the houses. All strangers in the city were in great danger of being suspected and treated as insurgents. The evangelist in leaving the city was seized by some of the mob. Some said he was one of the insurgents, others said he was not. He succeeded in making his escape to the house of a friend outside of the city walls. The colporteur made his escape over the wall of the



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city and fled to the house of some friends in the suburbs near the river-side. By my letter of May 19th, it will be seen that Amoy was attacked by the insurgents on the morning (May 18th), after they entered the city of Chiangchui. The insurgents are members of a secret society. For very many years there has existed in this region a society by the name of 'Thian-te-hoe,' Heaven and Earth Society. This is the name by which the members designate their society. But as the members are generally provided with knives or small swords, the society is designated by the people as 'Sio-to-hoe,' Small Sword Society. The professed object of this society has been the overthrow of the present Tartar dynasty. Between this and Chiangchui the members of this society are very numerous. After the breaking out of the insurrection at Hai-teng, and Chioh-be (cities fifteen and eighteen miles from Amoy, half way to Chiangchui), the whole populace appeared to sympathize with the movement. Large bodies of the insurgents moved up the river to Chiangchui, others came down the river to Amoy. At the same time there was a rising of the insurgents at Tong-an and An-khoe, districts to the north of Amoy. At the first outbreak the officials and soldiers fled. The people of Amoy have been in continual excitement and fear. They are afraid to engage in business. On Sabbath morning we went to our chapels as usual. Shortly after commencing services, news came that a fleet of war junks under the command of the Admiral was anchoring a short distance from the city. Soon the whole city was in commotion. About noon a detachment of a thousand soldiers was landed from the junks. They marched with very little opposition through the town to the gates of the city. They were attacked simultaneously by the insurgents from within, and by those in ambush without. The insurgents were victorious.

"By three o'clock in the afternoon the city was comparatively quiet, and we repaired to our church. Most of the church members were assembled. Our church edifice is situated on the great thoroughfare which had been the principal scene of excitement. It was thought best to suspend the usual exercises, to close the street doors, and hold if possible a quiet prayer-meeting. It was a solemn time. The 'confused noise' of war had just been heard, human blood had been flowing, the angry passions of men were not yet calmed, and we knew not what the end would be. We felt it a suitable time to draw near to God and make Him our refuge. This afternoon we received tidings from Chiangchui. The evangelist was arrested by twelve men, delivered to an official and beheaded."

"June 10, 1853. The state of affairs through the whole of this region remains very unsettled. The insurgents are endeavoring to regain possession of the city of Chiangchui. They have command of the whole region, between this place and that city. They still are in possession of Amoy. We are almost daily expecting an attack by the government authorities.



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“Amoy is cut off from all trade with the large towns around. The insurgents probably would not permit goods to be carried to Chiangchiu and other places with which they are at war. Besides, this whole region is infested with pirates. It is only at great risk that any merchant junk can at present come to or depart from Amoy. We cannot yet form any definite opinion as to the final result of this movement. The forces of the insurgents are none of them drilled soldiers. Their appearance is that of an armed mob. Their weapons are mostly spears, and knives and matchlocks.

“At the time the insurrection broke out in our neighborhood and while we were expecting an attack on our city by the insurgents, we felt some anxiety. We had no means of deciding how they would feel towards foreigners. We supposed they would feel it to be for their own interest not to meddle with foreigners. They knew that they would have enough to do to contend with their own government, without at the same time involving themselves with foreign powers. More than all this, we had the doctrines and promises of God’s word on which to rely. These we feel at all times give us the only unfailing security. They are worth more than armies and navies. It is only when God uses armies and navies for the fulfillment of His own promises that they are worth anything to us.”

### **HOW THE CHINESE FIGHT.**

July 28, 1853. To his brother, Daniel.

“I suppose you will feel more desirous to learn about the state of politics and war at Amoy. At present everything is quiet. Three weeks ago another attempt was made by the Mandarins to retake Amoy. They landed a body of troops on the opposite side of the island. These were to march across the island (about ten miles) and attack the city by land. Simultaneously an attack was to be made on the city from the water side by the Mandarin fleet. It is said that the land forces amounted to about 10,000. The fleet consisted of about forty sail. On Wednesday morning (July 6th), about daybreak, the troops were put in motion. They were met with about an equal number of rebel troops. They fought until the Mandarin soldiers became hungry (about eight or nine o’clock). Not being relieved at that time, as they expected, they withdrew to cook their rice. The Mandarin in command considering that his life was much more important than that of the soldiers, kept himself at a safe distance from the scene of action. At about breakfast-time he started to go down in his sedan chair nearer the scene of action. When he saw that his troops were retiring to cook their breakfast, he supposed that they were giving way before the enemy. Prudence being the better part of valor, he ordered his chair-bearers to face about and carry him in the other direction. The soldiers, finding that their chief officer had fled, thought there was no further need of risking their lives,



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so they all retired. I cannot vouch for the truth of the whole of the above statement. Such, however, is the story soberly related by some of the Chinese. We could see the smoke and hear the reports of the guns from the top of our house. The fighting commenced very early. We thought that the Mandarin troops were gradually approaching the city, until about Chinese breakfast-time (eight to nine o'clock), when the firing ceased. We know not how many lives were lost in the engagement. The rebels brought into the city some seventeen or eighteen heads which they had decapitated. I know not whether these were all killed in the fight or whether they were the heads of some villagers on whom the rebels took vengeance for assisting the Mandarins."

"Now for the engagement on the water. The rebel forces on the water were much inferior to the Mandarin forces, but the Chinese say they fought more desperately. The engagement opened on Wednesday about noon and lasted until nearly evening. Towards evening the Mandarin fleet withdrew a few miles and came to anchor. On Thursday at high-tide (about noon) the engagement was renewed. Towards evening the Mandarin fleet again withdrew as before. On Friday the engagement was again renewed with similar results. On Saturday the Mandarin fleet withdrew entirely and left the harbor.

"During the three days of the fight, as you would expect, there was much excitement in Amoy. The tops of the houses and the hills around about, at the time of the engagement, were thronged with people, and there was a continual discharge of cannon. But I have not given the number of the killed and wounded in the three days' naval action. Reports, you know, are often much exaggerated on such occasions. According to the most reliable statements (and I have not yet heard of any other statement), the list stands thus:

"Killed-None!

"Wounded-None!

"Prisoners-None!

"It is said that one ball from a Mandarin junk did strike a rebel junk, but did not hurt any one. During the fighting the vessels kept so far apart that the balls almost always fell into the water between them. On the second day of the fight, a boat from the city in which were three men, who were not engaged in the fight, was captured by the Mandarin fleet, and the three men were beheaded. War is too serious a matter to be laughed at, but the kind of war we have thus far seen at Amoy is only like children's play."

Nov. 1, 1853. To his brother, Daniel.



“Our war still continues, fighting almost every day. The day I sent off my last package to you, two more balls struck our house. One came through the roof of an unoccupied part of the premises. I did not weigh it, but suppose it was about a six-pounder. The other struck against a pillar in the outside wall and fell down and was picked up by some one outside of the house, so that I do not know the size of it. It was a merciful Providence that it struck the pillar.



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If it had struck on either side of the pillar, it would have come into a room in which many Chinese were collected. On Sunday last there was much fighting again. A small ball came into our veranda. A small ball entered Mr. Doty's house, one entered Mr. Alexander Stronach's house, several entered Dr. Hirschberg's house; other houses also were struck. Dr. Hirschberg's house has been the most exposed. We have all been preserved from harm thus far. He, who has thus far preserved us, I trust will continue to preserve us. The fighting is more serious than at first. A little more courage is manifested and more execution is done. But I do not see any prospect of either party being victorious. The party whose funds are completely used up first, will doubtless have to yield to the other. I cannot tell which that will be. I shall be heartily glad when one of the armies withdraws from Amoy. The country around Amoy is becoming desolated. Houses and whole villages are plundered and burned. In Amoy suffering abounds, and I suppose is increasing. When I go out into the street I usually put a handful of cash into my pocket to distribute to the beggars."

In November, 1853, Imperial authority asserted itself.

"The Imperial forces having collected from the neighboring garrisons, appeared in such overwhelming strength that the insurgents hastily put off to sea. Many succeeded in escaping to Formosa and Singapore. The leader was accidentally shot off Macao. The restoration of Imperial authority was followed, however, by terrible scenes of official cruelty and bloodthirstiness. The guilty had escaped, but the Emperor Hienfung's officials wreaked their rage on the helpless and unoffending townspeople. Hundreds of both sexes were slain in cold blood, and on more than one occasion English officers and seamen interfered to protect the weak and to arrest the progress of an indiscriminating and insensate massacre."

## VII. THE BLOSSOMING DESERT.

"In tropical lands, when the rain comes, what was barren baked earth, in a day or two is rich meadow, all ablaze with flowers, and the dry torrent beds, where the stones lay white and glistening ghastly in the hot sunshine, are foaming with rushing streams and fringed with budding oleanders." Such a spiritual transformation it was the glad privilege of our missionaries to witness in the region of Amoy during the years 1854 and 1855. Until then, to the eye of man only an occasional seed had burst its way through the stone-crustured earth and given a shadow of harvest hope. The first four years of prayer and testimony from 1842-1846 were definitely and visibly rewarded with only two converts.

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When Mr. Talmage arrived at Amoy in 1847 the total church membership was three. By 1850 it had grown to five. By the end of 1851 the seed had brought forth nearly fourfold. There were nineteen converts. This was the harbinger of brighter days. Even during the troublous times of 1853 signs of awakening appeared. In the midst of war and rumors of war the native brethren had proposed to enter the "regions beyond" Chiangchiu and Chinchew. The faithful preaching of Doty and Talmage in the chapels and on the streets of Amoy city, among the towns and villages of Amoy Island and the mainland; the apostolic labors of William Burns, whose joy it was to sow beside all waters, -these had found acceptance with God and with the people. Inquirers multiplied at the chapels. They came from among the shopkeepers and boatmen of Amoy, from cities and towns along the arms of the sea and up the inland rivers, from remote country hamlets beyond the mountains.

Mr. Talmage's letters during 1854 and 1855 tell of the great awakening.

"This year (1854), thus far, has been one of unusual blessing, a year 'of the right hand of the Most High.' Early in January, knowing that there were a few individuals desirous of receiving Christian baptism, we appointed a meeting for the examination of such, and also for personal conversation with all others who might feel an especial interest in Christianity. We were agreeably surprised to find the number of inquirers and candidates for baptism much greater than we had supposed. We also found among the inquirers an unusual tenderness of conscience, and sense of sinfulness, and anxiety for the salvation of the soul. Seeing such evidence that the Holy Spirit was shedding abroad His quickening influences among this people, we appointed a similar interview for the week following.

"These meetings for the examination and instruction of inquirers we have continued almost every week, and occasionally twice a week, till the present time. Sometimes the inquirers present have numbered thirty or forty, perhaps more. At times, moreover, the depth of feeling manifested has been such that the eyes of every one present have been suffused with tears. These meetings, we trust, have been very profitable, as well as interesting."

"On Sabbath, March 26th, we were permitted to receive into the fellowship of the Christian Church ten individuals, eight men and two women, the eldest a widow woman aged sixty-eight, the youngest a young man aged twenty." "On the last Sabbath in May, we again received nine persons, six men and three women, the eldest an old man aged seventy-four, the youngest a young man aged twenty-three."

"On the thirtieth of July (Sabbath), we again baptized nine others, four men and five women, the eldest a widow aged fifty-one, the youngest a girl aged sixteen. Thus the whole number of adults baptized by us at Amoy during the present year, thus far, is twenty-eight."

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He cites individual cases. Speaking of an aged widow he says:

“She lives at a village some fifteen miles or more from Amoy. Boats coming from that place to this place land at a wharf near my house. On one occasion, when she arrived here a few months ago, she resolved to come to my house, and see how the foreigners lived. On entering, she was met by the Christian who has charge of the chapel. He asked her business. She said that she only came for amusement. He replied, ‘This is not a place to visit for amusement, but to hear the doctrine.’ ‘Well,’ says she, ‘then I will hear the doctrine.’ He explained to her something of the truths of Christianity. He told her also that after breakfast I should be in the chapel for morning worship. She went back to the neighbor’s house whence she had come, to wait until after breakfast. But the new doctrine which she had heard, took so deep a hold on her mind, that she desired no breakfast for herself. Soon she again came to hear more. She was deeply impressed with the truth and importance of the things which she heard. She reasoned with herself thus: ‘The myriads of people I meet with do not know what is in my heart, but these people tell me what is in my heart and in my bones. This doctrine cannot be of man. It must be the great power of God.’ She was poor and lived at a distance from Amoy. She learned that the Christian who had charge of the chapel was of the same surname with herself. She inquired whether she might not come down next Saturday, and lodge with his family. She said she would bring with her some dried potatoes for her food. Of course her request was readily granted. From that time to the present, she has come the whole distance from her village to Amoy almost every week, in order to hear the Gospel. She has two sons and one daughter. She has brought both her sons with her, desiring that they also may become Christians. The eldest, aged seventeen, is among our inquirers. She has also brought some of her neighbors with her to hear the Word. She has met with much opposition and persecution; but so far as we can learn, she has borne all with the meekness of a true disciple of Christ. Since her baptism, she has rented a room in Amoy, that she may live within sound of the Gospel. When she told me of this, I asked her how she expected to maintain herself, and whether she thought she should be able to earn a living at Amoy. She replied that she trusted in God. If she could not get as good food as others, she would eat coarser food.

“There is still a goodly number of inquirers at Amoy. In our meeting for conversation with them to-day; we met with two very affecting cases. They are lads, the elder being in his seventeenth year, and the younger in his thirteenth. Their parents and friends bitterly oppose them in their determination to follow Christ.

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“They have been severely beaten. The elder was severely scourged yesterday. This morning he was again tied up in a very painful manner, and beaten by his cruel father. He carried the marks of his sufferings on his arms, which we saw. We were told that he had scars also on other parts of his body. We trust that they are ‘the marks of the Lord Jesus.’ A brother, still younger than themselves, we are told, also worships Jesus. If they are, indeed, lambs of Christ’s flock, the blessed Saviour will take care of them; but their severe afflictions should call forth much sympathy and prayer in their behalf.

“The conduct of our church members continues to give us much comfort. They are not free from faults. They need much careful oversight and exhortation and instruction. In consequence of this, our cares, anxieties, and labors must necessarily increase as the converts increase. But if allowance be made for their limited knowledge, only a short time having elapsed since the most of them first heard the Gospel, there are probably but few churches, even in our own beloved country, compared with which the Christian character of this little flock would suffer. Were it not for the Christian activity of our members, so many of them abounding in good works, our operations here would necessarily be confined within much narrower limits. Almost every one seems to be impressed with the truth, that he or she is to improve every opportunity to speak a word for Christ. Many of them are quite effective speakers. The heathen are often astonished to hear men from the lower walks of life, who previously had not had the benefit of any education, and are yet perhaps unable to read, speak with such fluency, and reason with such power concerning the things of God, as to silence all their adversaries, even though they be men of education.”

Speaking of the awakening at Peh-chui-ia, a market-town once under our care, now under the care of the English Presbyterians, Mr. Talmage continues:

“We have been specially interested in their lively faith, their praying spirit, their earnestness in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and, as a consequence of all this, their joy in the Holy Ghost.

“The house first rented was found too small and uncomfortable for our work. The adjoining house, of about the same size, and the upper part of the next house, have since been rented, and doors opened through the walls. Thus we have several rooms for lodging and conversation, and also for holding more private meetings than we could in the chapel. The members and inquirers spend the greater part of the Sabbath at the mission premises studying the Scriptures, listening to the preaching of the Word, and in religious conversation and prayer. They go home only for their meals, and some not even for that. A part of them spend much of their time there in similar employments on other days of the week. When we have been with them, we have been much gratified by seeing their earnestness in the study of the Scriptures. They are continually coming to us for explanation of passages which they cannot understand. Often the voice of prayer will be heard from all parts of the house at once. They are but babes in Christ;

yet their knowledge of the Scriptures is remarkable. We feel it good for our own souls to be among them.”



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This market-town owed much to the earnest labors of Rev. W. C. Burns, whose words and manner of life are still a fragrant memory among the brethren there. He was the first English Presbyterian missionary to China. He arrived in 1847. For the first four years he carried on evangelistic work at Hongkong and Canton. He came to Amoy in 1851.

Mr. Talmage alludes to a family at Peh-chui-ia who had endured much for Christ's sake.

"This family have been twice plundered. Once their house was set on fire by a band of robbers, and everything was destroyed, themselves only escaping with their lives by a remarkable providence." (So intense is the hatred of some of the officials against Christianity that bold robberies will take place with their connivance, sometimes at their instigation.) "These afflictions seem to have been employed by the Spirit of God in preparing their hearts for the reception of the Gospel. On the first announcement of the Word, they were deeply impressed with its truth. The father, however, had a hard struggle; and the opposition from his neighbors was too much for him at the first. At one time, he resolved to run away from the place altogether. At another time he meditated drowning himself. While in this state of mind, he derived much benefit from the counsel and earnest entreaties of his wife. She exhorted and besought him to exhibit the meekness and endurance taught by the meek and suffering Saviour. He who never suffers His people to be tempted above that they are able to bear, at length raised him above the fear of man, and established his goings. On one occasion, when we were conversing with him, it was suggested that he might again be robbed. He replied that he did not believe he should be, for he now trusted in God. We suggested, 'Perhaps the very fact that you have turned from idols to the service of the true God, may lead the enemies of the Gospel to band together and plunder you.' He answered, 'I do not believe that they will. They will not, except it be the will of God. If it be His will, I also am willing.' On one occasion it was suggested that he might even be brought before magistrates because of the Gospel. He answered that he had no anxiety on that subject. When the time came the Holy Ghost would teach him what to speak. He has since had his faith put to the test, but his confidence was not disappointed. The enemies of the Gospel banded together to demand of him money as his share of the expenses of some idolatrous celebration, resolving, if he refused to pay the money, to plunder his establishment. A crowd collected at his door to carry the resolution into effect. They made their demand for the money. But he was enabled to speak to them with such power that they trembled in his presence, it is said, and were glad to leave him alone."

Mr. Talmage writes of the great change in a man notoriously wicked, who at fifty-one years of age yielded to Christ.



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“For thirty-one years he was addicted to the smoking of opium. When the brethren first saw him, he seemed just ready to fall into the grave. He also had a bad reputation throughout the town, being accustomed to meddling with other people’s business. He was a man of good natural abilities, and the people feared him. He has given up his opium and his other vile practices. His whole character seems to have undergone a change. He also has been called, as have all the others in that town, to experience persecution. His enemies are those of his own house. His opium-smoking, and all his other wickedness, they could endure; but they cannot endure his Christianity, his temperance, his meek and quiet spirit. One of my visits to Peh-chui-ia was on the day after his friends had been manifesting, especial opposition to him. I found him greatly rejoicing that he had been called to suffer persecution for Christ’s sake, and that he had been enabled to bear it so meekly. He said the Holy Scriptures had been verified, referring to Matthew v.11, 12. He said that he had been enabled to preach the Gospel to those who had met to oppose him for two hours, until his voice failed him. He was still quite hoarse from his much speaking. He had told them of the change which he had experienced through the power of the Holy Spirit on his heart; but he also said he knew they could not understand his meaning, when he spoke of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. If they would worship Jesus, however, and pray to the Holy Spirit to change their hearts, as his had been changed, then they would understand him.”

### **SI-BOO’S ZEAL.**

An interesting case narrated in the life of W. C. Burns is that of Si-boo, who afterwards went as an evangelist among his own countrymen at Singapore.

“On Mr. Burns’ first visit to Pechuia, he found amongst the foremost and most interesting of his hearers, a youth of about eighteen or twenty, called Si-boo.

“Of stature rather under the average of his countrymen, with an eye and countenance more open than usual, and a free and confiding manner, he soon attracted the attention of the missionary. His position in life was above the class of common mechanics, and his education rather good for his position. His occupation was to carve small idols in wood for the houses of his idolatrous countrymen, of every variety of style and workmanship, some plain and cheap, and some of the most elaborate and costly description. Had Si-boo been of the spirit of Demetrius, he would have opposed and persecuted Mr. Burns for bringing his craft into danger. But instead of that, he manifested a spirit of earnest, truthful inquiry, although that inquiry was one in which all the prepossessions, and prejudices, and passions of mind and heart were against the truth—an inquiry in which all the influence of friends, and all his prospects in life, were cast into the wrong balance. By the



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grace of God he made that solemn inquiry with such simplicity and sincerity, that it soon led to an entire conviction of the truth of our religion, and that to a decided profession of faith at all hazards; and these hazards, in such a place as Pechuia, were neither few nor small-far greater than at Amoy, where the presence of a large body of converts, and a considerable English community, and a British flag, might seem to hold out a prospect of both protection and support in time of need, though such protection and temporal aid have never been relied on by even our Amoy converts, still less encouraged.

“One of the first sacrifices to which Si-boo was called was a great one. His trade of idol-carver must be given up, and with that his only means of support; and that means both respectable and lucrative to a skillful hand like his. But to his credit he did not hesitate. He at once threw it up and cast himself on the providence of God, and neither asked nor received any assistance from the missionary, but at once set himself to turn his skill as a carver in a new and legitimate direction. He became a carver of beads for bracelets and other ornaments, and was soon able to support himself and assist his mother in this way. One advantage of this new trade was, that it was portable. With a few small knives, and a handful of olive-stones, he could prosecute his work wherever he liked to take his seat, and he frequently took advantage of this to prosecute his Master’s work, while he was diligent in his own. Sometimes he would take his seat on the ‘Gospel Boat’ when away on some evangelistic enterprise; and while we were slowly rowing up some river or creek, or scudding away before a favorable wind to some distant port, Si-boo would be busy at work on his beads; but as soon as we reached our destination, the beads and tools were thrust into his pouch, and with his Bible and a few tracts in his hand, he was off to read or talk to the people, and leave his silent messengers behind him.”

During the same year (1854), Mr. Doty wrote a letter to Mr. Burns while in Scotland, in regard to the awakening at Chioh-be, a large town of 30,000 inhabitants, eight miles northwest of Peh-chui-ia. An extract reads as follows:

“But what shall I tell you of the Lord’s visitation of mercy at Chioh-be? Again, truly, are we as those that dream. The general features of the work are very similar to what you witnessed at Pechui-ia. The instrumentality has been native brethren almost entirely. Attention was first awakened in one or two by I-ju and Tick-jam, who went to Chioh-be together.

“This was two or three months ago. This was followed up by repeated visits of other brethren from Pechui-ia and Amoy. Shortly the desire to hear the Word was so intense, that there would be scarcely any stop day or night; the brethren in turns going, and breaking down from much speaking in the course of three or four days, and coming back to us almost voiceless.”



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### AN APPEAL FOR A MISSIONARY.

On the 30th of August, 1854, Mr. Talmage wrote, enclosing the subjoined appeal of the church at Peh-chui-ia for a missionary. It is addressed to the American Board, which these brethren call "the Public Society." A duplicate letter was sent at the same time to Mr. Burns to be presented to the Board of Foreign Missions of the English Presbyterian Church. "They tell us," says Mr. Talmage, "that every sentence has been prayed over. According to their own statement, they would write a sentence, and then pray, and then write another sentence, and then pray again."

"By the mercy and grace of God, called to be little children of the Saviour Jesus, we send this letter to the Public Society, desiring that God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, may bestow grace and peace on all the saints connected with the Public Society. We desire you to know the boundless grace and favor of God towards us, and in behalf of us, little children, heartily to thank God because that the announcement of God's grace has been conveyed by your nation to our nation, and to our province, even to Amoy, and to our market-town Peh-chui-ia. We desire the Public Society to be thoroughly informed, so that they may very heartily thank God and the Lord Jesus Christ; for we at Peh-chui-ia originally dwelt in the region of death and gloomy darkness, a place under the curse of God, and were exposed to God's righteous punishment. But many thanks to God's compassion and mercy, the Holy Spirit influenced the pastors of your nation to send holy brethren (Amoy native Christians), in company with the English pastor, the teacher, William Burns, unto our market town, to unfold the holy announcement of grace, and preach the Gospel. Many thanks to God, whose grace called several brethren, by day and by night, to listen to the preaching of the Gospel, for the space of four months. Many thanks to the Holy Spirit, who opened our darkened hearts, and led us unto the Saviour Jesus, whose precious blood delivers from sin. By the grace of God five persons were received into the Church and baptized. Again, two months afterwards four persons were received into the Church and baptized. There are still some ten persons and more, from different quarters, not yet baptized, who have been operated on, so that they listen to the preaching with gladness of heart.

"By the will of God, the English pastor has been called to return to his own nation. Our place is distant from Amoy by water, several tens of 'lis,' [One li is about one-third of a mile] so that it is difficult to come and go. The two pastors of your nation at Amoy (Messrs. Doty and Talmage) have not a moment to spare from labor, for the holy brethren there are many; and it is difficult for them to leave home.

"We, the brethren of the church at our market town, with united heart pray, earnestly beseeching God again graciously to compassionate us, and send a pastor from the Public Society of your nation, that he may quickly come, and instruct us plainly in the Gospel.



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“It is to be deplored-the brethren having heard the teacher William Burns preach the Word for a few months, their spiritual nature only just born again, not yet having obtained firmness in the faith, that just at this time, in the seventh month, the pastor should be separated from us.

“Day and night our tears flow; and with united heart we pray, earnestly beseeching God graciously to grant that of the disciples of the Lord Jesus a pastor hastily come, and preach to us the Gospel, this food of grace with its savoriness of grace, in order to strengthen the faith of us, little children. Moreover, we pray God to influence the saints of your nation that they may always keep us little children in remembrance. Therefore, on the 28th day of the seventh month (August 21, 1854) the brethren with united heart have prayed earnestly beseeching God that this our general letter may be conveyed to the great Public Society, that you may certainly know these our affairs, and pray God, in behalf of us, that this our request may be granted. Please give our salutation to the brethren.

*Kong-BIAU,  
Tek-IAM,  
Tek-EIAN,  
U-ju,  
Si\_BU,  
JIT-Som,  
KI-an,  
Lam-San,  
Kim koa,*

“The disciples of Jesus at Peh-chui-ia.

“Presented to the Public Society that all the disciples may read it.”

Mr. Talmage concludes a letter speaking of the “times of refreshing” in these words:

“This remarkable work may well fill our hearts with gratitude and encouragement. Heretofore, we have always been obliged to wait a long time before we were permitted to see much fruit of our labor; and we were almost led to the conclusion that such must always be the case, in carrying the Gospel to a heathen people. Now we see that such need not be the course of events. We should preach the Gospel with larger expectations, and in the hope of more immediate fruit. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can shine into the darkest minds, 'to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus' on the first announcement of the truth as it is in Jesus. When the proper time comes, and His Church is made ready for the great accession, it will be an easy thing for Him to accomplish the expectation that a nation shall be born at once.”



## VIII. CHURCH UNION.

Missionary work in its initial stage has only to do with first principles.

Given shelter, food, power of utterance in a foreign tongue, a preaching spot, a company of hearers, and you have bounded the horizon for the present.

No sooner, however, is a goodly company of believers gathered, but problems, numerous and weighty, confront the missionary.

How shall the company of believers be organized and governed? Shall it be exactly on the model of the church which the missionary represents? If not, what modifications shall be made? Shall the seedling ten thousand miles away be roped to the mother tree or shall it be encouraged to stand alone? What advantages in independence? What perils? What shall be the status of the foreign missionary before the native church just organizing? What relation shall he sustain to the home church?

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The answers to these questions have been as various as the denominations represented in Oriental lands. The answers of missionaries representing the same denomination have not even tallied.

After the gracious awakening and ingathering at Amoy and in the region about, had taken place, the question of church organization became foremost. The missionaries gave the subject earnest thought. Men like Elihu Doty and John Van Nest Talmage and Carstairs Douglas, were not likely to come to conclusions hastily.

But they were born pioneers. Conservative enough never to lose their equilibrium, they had adaptability to new circumstances.

Quite willing to follow the beaten path so long as there was promise of harvest returns, they were prepared nevertheless to blaze a new road into the trackless forest if they were sure some of God's treasure-trove could be brought back on it. There was no divergence of view as to what the foundation of the new church-structure must be. 'For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' So long, however, as the general proportions were the same, there was no fear that the new edifice would topple over if it did not conform exactly in height and length and breadth, in column and pilaster and facade, to the venerated model in the mother countries. The brethren expressed their views to the churches in the home land. They did more. They plead their cause and hoped for endorsement. The following is part of a lengthy but very interesting communication written by Mr. Talmage and sent to the Synod of the Reformed Church in 1856:

"Amoy, China, Sept. 17, 1856.

"To the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church.

"Fathers and Brethren: We your missionaries at Amoy, China, have, by the blessing of the Head of the Church on our labors, arrived at a stage of progress in our work which imposes on us weighty responsibilities, and we feel the need of counsel and advice. It will be proper for us to give a brief account of our Mission, of our work, of the blessing of God on our labors, of our peculiar circumstances, and of the principles on which we have acted hitherto, and which we think should still guide us in our efforts to establish the Kingdom of Christ in this land, that you may praise God in our behalf and in behalf of this people, and assist us by your sympathies, prayers, and counsels. Our Mission was commenced at Amoy by the late Rev. David Abeel, D.D. Mr. Abeel arrived at Amoy in company with the Rev. (now Bishop) Boone, on the 24th of February, 1842. On the 22d of June, 1844, Rev. E. Doty and Rev. Wm. J. Pohlman arrived at Amoy from Borneo. In Dec., 1844, Mr. Abeel in consequence of continued and increasing ill health left Amoy on his return to the United States. Mrs. Pohlman and Mrs. Doty having been removed by death, Mr. Doty left Amoy for the United States, Nov. 12, 1845, with his own and Mr. Pohlman's children. Rev. J. V. N. Talmage accompanied Mr. Doty on his return



to Amoy, arriving Aug. 19, 1847. Mr. Pohlman was lost at sea Jan. 5, or 6, 1849. Mr. Talmage was away from Amoy from March 24, 1849 to July 16, 1850. Rev. J. Joralmon arrived at Amoy, April 21, 1856.



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“Mr. Boone, of the Episcopal Church of the United States, was at Amoy but a short time. After him there have been no missionaries of that church at Amoy. The mission of the American Presbyterian Board at Amoy was commenced by the arrival of Rev. T. L. McBryde, in June, 1842. He left Amoy in January, 1843. James C. Hepburn, M.D., arrived in 1843, and retired in 1845. Rev. John Lloyd arrived in Dec., 1844. Rev. H. A. Brown arrived in 1845 and left Amoy for the United States in Dec., 1847. Mr. Lloyd died in Dec., 1848. Since then that mission has not been continued at Amoy.

“W. H. Cumming, M.D., a medical missionary, but not connected with any missionary society, arrived at Amoy, June, 1842, and left Amoy in the early part of 1847. The London Missionary Society’s Mission at Amoy was commenced by the arrival of Rev. Messrs. J. Stronach and William Young, in July, 1844. Since then other agents of that society have arrived, some of whom have again left and some still remain. They now number three ministers of the Gospel and one physician.

“The Mission of the English Presbyterian Church at Amoy was commenced by the arrival of James H. Young, M.D., in May, 1850. Rev. W. C. Burns arrived in July, 1851. Rev. James Johnston arrived in Dec., 1853. Dr. Young and Mr. Burns left Amoy in August, 1854. Mr. Johnston left Amoy in May, 1855. Rev. C. Douglas arrived at Amoy in July, 1855. He is now the only member of that Mission at Amoy. All the members of this Mission, although sent out by the English Presbyterian Church, were originally members of the Free Church of Scotland.

“The present missionary force at Amoy are three ministers and one physician of the London Missionary Society (in their ecclesiastical relations they are Independents), one minister of the English Presbyterian Church, and ourselves, three ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church.

“The first converts received into the Christian Church at Amoy were two old men, baptized by Mr. Pohlman in April, 1846. The next converts received were two men baptized by Mr. A. Stronach, of the London Missionary Society, in March, 1848. A few months later Mr. Stronach baptized one more. Since then every year has witnessed additions to the church. We received into our church by baptism in 1849 three persons; in 1850 five; in 1851 eight; in 1852 two; in 1853 six; in 1854 including those baptized at Peh-chui-ia, fifty-three; in 1855 including Peh-chui-ia and Chioh-be, seventy-two; during the present year thus far, also including Pehchui-ia and Chioh-be, fifty. The whole number now connected with our church at Amoy is one hundred and twenty-one. The number at Peh-chui-ia is forty-two. The number at Chioh-be is thirty-one. In all, the number is one hundred and ninety-four. The London Mission has also been greatly blessed. They now have in connection with their church at Amoy and in vicinity one hundred and fifty-one members. After acquiring the language



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of this people, we have felt that our great work is to preach the Gospel. Every other department of labor must be entirely secondary to this. The Scriptures are clearly in favor of these views, and our own experience has confirmed these views until they have become very decided. We have already mentioned the name of Mr. Burns as uniting in labors with our church members. The brethren of the English Presbyterian Church, in the providence of God, have been brought very near to us. We have rendered each other much assistance and often have labored together almost as one Mission.

“When Mr. Burns arrived at Amoy, providentially he found and secured a room not far from our church edifice, and near to the residences of several of our church members. As soon as he was able to use the dialect of Amoy, many of our church members and inquirers were glad of the privilege of meeting with him daily for the study of the Scriptures and for prayer. Mr. Burns came to Amoy for the simple purpose of preaching the Gospel. He did not wish to take the responsibility of organizing a separate church. He was ready to co-operate with us or with the London brethren. He often rendered them assistance likewise. When he became able to use the language with freedom, he often preached in our church. When he went out for street preaching, or went out to visit the towns and villages around, he always took with him native Christians, usually the members of our church, having been providentially placed among them. Early in the year 1854, Mr. Burns with some of our church members visited the region of Peh-chui-ia. Much interest was awakened in that region in the subject of Christianity. A goodly number, we trust, were born of the Spirit. Mr. Burns did not wish to take the responsibility of a pastor, desiring to keep himself free for evangelistic labors wherever a door might be opened before him. He requested us to examine the candidates for baptism and receive those whom we deemed worthy, and take the pastoral care of them. We yielded to the desires of Mr. Burns and took charge of Pehchui-ia.

“Mr. Burns continued to spend much of his time in that place and vicinity until he was called to leave Amoy. Shortly after the departure of Mr. Burns, learning that the English Presbyterians would have been glad to retain Peh-chui-ia, and Mr. Johnston (E. P.) being willing to take charge there as far as he was able, we very willingly relinquished it to them. He was still unable to use the language with freedom, so we continued to visit the place as often as we could. Before Mr. Johnston’s knowledge was sufficient to relieve us of the pastoral care of that interesting church, his ill-health compelled him to return to his native land. His place was soon supplied by the arrival of Mr. Douglas. We have continued the same pastoral care of that church. Lately our visits to the place have become less frequent, as Mr. Douglas has become better acquainted with the language.



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“In the latter half of the year 1851, some of the Christians from Peh-chui-ia went to the large town of Chioh-be on business and preached the Gospel as they had opportunity. They found a few persons who listened to their message with interest and manifested a desire to hear more. When this fact, on their return, was reported to the churches of Peh-chui-ia and Amoy, other Christians went to Chioh-be. A great interest was awakened. A small house was rented for a chapel. This house was thronged every day throughout the day and evening. Soon as we had opportunity we visited the place to converse with inquirers and examine candidates for baptism. In January, 1855, the first converts at that place were baptized. The interest continued to increase. We found the premises we had rented entirely too small. As soon as a larger and more suitable place could be found it was secured. Soon after this a violent persecution broke out. The immediate effect was greatly to hinder the work. Only those who were sufficiently interested in the Gospel to raise them above the fear of man dared attend the place of worship. Still there has been constant progress.

“If the churches gathered by us are to be organized simply with respect to the glory of God and their own welfare, there is a fact in our circumstances which should have great weight in forming this organization. This fact is the intimate relation and hitherto oneness of the churches under our care and under the care of the missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church. In the foregoing short history of our work it will be seen that we have been and are closely connected with the missionaries of that Church. From the first we have had the pastoral care of their church gathered at Peh-chui-ia and in the surrounding region. They have not attempted the organization of any church at Amoy. By far the greater proportion of their influence and labors at Amoy has been in the direction of assisting us in our work. They have acted as though they thought it was of no importance whatever whether converts were received into church fellowship by us or them. Doubtless the church members, although perfectly aware that we and our English Presbyterian brethren are of different Churches and different countries, suppose that they form but one Church. When the time had arrived for a regular organization of our church in Amoy, the question presented itself: Shall we invite Mr. Douglas, then and still the only English Presbyterian missionary at Amoy, to unite with us in our deliberations? By the providence of God our missions had been brought closely together. We had been laboring together in the work of the Lord, were one in sympathy, held the same views in theology, and did not differ in regard to church polity. But one answer could be given to this question. We cordially invited him. He as cordially accepted of our invitation, and heartily engaged with us in our church meetings, held in reference to the election



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of church officers. He voted with us and our church members. He united with us in setting apart the officers-elect to their respective offices, and since then has usually united with us in our deliberations in our consistorial meetings. Surely in this matter we have acted according to the leadings of Providence and the spirit and instructions of the Gospel of Christ; for in Christ Jesus there is no distinction of nationalities. Our labors having thus far been so intermingled and our churches so intimately related and united together, we can see no sufficient reason for separation. If there be any advantage in the association of churches by the organization of Classes or Presbyteries, why should we deprive these churches in their infancy and weakness of this advantage? We have always taught our people to study the Word of God and make it their rule. Can we give them a sufficient reason for such separation? Doubtless if we were to tell them, that the churches by which we are sent out and sustained desire separate organizations, and therefore should recommend such organizations to them, they would acquiesce. They know that they cannot stand alone. Gratitude, also, and ardent affection for those churches by whose liberality they have been made acquainted with the Gospel, would lead them to do all in their power to please those churches. We can hardly suppose, however, that such separation would accord with their judgment, or with those Christian feelings which they have always exercised towards each other as members of the same Church. But we do not suppose that either our Church or the English Presbyterian Church will recommend such a separation. The Dutch Church in North America has always manifested an enlarged Christian spirit, and therefore we cannot doubt but that she will approve of an organization by which the churches here, which are one in doctrine and one in spirit, may also be one in ecclesiastical matters. Neither do we doubt but that the English Presbyterian Church will also approve of the same course. We do not know as much of that Church as we hope to know in the future. Yet we know enough of her already to love her. But if separation must come, let not our Church bear the responsibility.

“Another question of importance may arise. What shall be our relation as individuals to the Dutch Church in America? We see no reason and desire not to change the relation we have always sustained. We were set apart by that Church to do the work of evangelists. This is the work in which we still wish to be engaged. We must preach the Gospel. As God gives success to our labors we must organize churches, and take oversight of them as long as they need that oversight. When we find suitable men, we must ‘ordain elders in every city.’ Such is the commission we hold from our Church, and from the great Head of the Church. Theoretically, difficulties may be suggested. Practically, with the principles on which we have thus far acted, we see no serious difficulties in our way. We must seek for Divine guidance, take the Scriptures for our rule, and follow the leadings of Providence. We are all liable to err. But with these principles, assisted by your counsels, and especially by your prayers, we have reason to believe, and do believe, that the Spirit of truth will guide us in the way of truth.”



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Dr. Talmage also sent a communication to Dr. Thomas De Witt, then Corresponding Secretary for the Reformed Church in co-operation with the American Board. It reads:

“Oct. 1, 1856. There are some other facts arising out of the circumstances of this people, and of the nature of the Chinese language, which have a certain importance and perhaps should be laid before the Church. No part of the name of our Church, peculiar to our denomination, can be translated and applied to the church in Chinese without inconvenience or great detriment. The words, Protestant and Reformed, would be to the Chinese unintelligible, consequently inconvenient. The only translation we can give to the name Dutch Church, would be Church of Holland. This, besides conveying in part an incorrect idea, would be very detrimental to the interests of the Church among the Chinese. The Chinese know but little of foreign nations and have for ages looked upon them all as barbarians. Of course the views of the native Christians are entirely changed on this subject. But our great work is to gather converts from the heathen. We should be very careful not to use any terms by which they would be unnecessarily prejudiced against the Gospel. It is constantly charged upon the native Christians, both as a reproach and as an objection to Christianity, that they are following foreigners or have become foreigners. The reproach is not a light one, but the objection is easily answered. The answer would not be so easy if we were to fasten on the Christians a foreign name.”

At the meeting of the General Synod, held in the village of Ithaca, New York, June, 1857, the following resolutions recommended by the Committee on Foreign Missions, Talbot W. Chambers, D.D., Chairman, were adopted:

*The memorial of the Amoy mission.*

“Among the papers submitted to the Synod is an elaborate document from the brethren at Amoy, giving the history of their work there, of its gradual progress, of their intimate connection with missionaries from other bodies, of the formation of the Church now existing there, and expressing their views as to the propriety and feasibility of forming a Classis at that station. In reply to so much of this paper as respects the establishment of individual churches, we must say that while we appreciate the peculiar circumstances of our brethren, and sympathize with their perplexities, yet it has always been considered a matter of course that ministers, receiving their commission through our Church, and sent forth under the auspices of our Board, would, when they formed converts from the heathen in an ecclesiastical body, mould the organization into a form approaching, as nearly as possible, that of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Churches in our own land. Seeing that the converted heathen, when associated together, must have some form of government, and seeing that our form is, in our view, entirely consistent with, if not

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required by the Scriptures, we expect that it will in all cases be adopted by our missionaries, subject, of course, to such modifications as their peculiar circumstances may for the time render necessary. The converts at Amoy, as at Arcot and elsewhere, are to be regarded as 'an integral part of our Church,' and as such are entitled to all the rights and privileges which we possess. And so in regard to the formation of a Classis. The Church at home will undoubtedly expect the brethren to associate themselves into a regular ecclesiastical organization, just as soon as enough materials are obtained to warrant such measure, with the hope that it will be permanent. We do not desire churches to be prematurely formed in order to get materials for a Classis, nor any other exercise of violent haste, but we equally deprecate unnecessary delay, believing that a regular organization will be alike useful to our brethren themselves and to those who, under them, are in training for the first office-bearers in the Christian Church on heathen ground. As to the difficulties suggested in the memorial, respecting the different Particular Synods to which the brethren belong, and the delays of carrying out a system of appellate jurisdiction covering America and China, it is enough to say:

"1. That the Presbyterian Church (Old School) finds no insuperable difficulties in carrying into operation her system, which comprehends Presbyteries and Synods in India as well as here; and, 2. That whatever hindrances may at anytime arise, this body will, in humble reliance upon the Divine aid and blessing, undertake to meet and remove them as far as possible. The Church at home assumes the entire responsibility of this matter, and only ask the brethren abroad to carry out the policy held steadily in view from the first moment when our Missions began.

"The following resolutions are recommended:

"Resolved, 1. That the Synod view with great pleasure the formation of churches among the converts from heathenism, organized according to the established usages of our branch of Zion.

"2. That the brethren at Amoy be directed to apply to the Particular Synod of Albany to organize them into a Classis, so soon as they shall have formed churches enough to render the permanency of such organization reasonably certain."

### **IX. CHURCH UNION (CONTINUED).**

This utterance of the General Synod, while made with the best intentions, fell with exceedingly painful echo on the ears of the missionaries at Amoy. Was the flock they had gathered with so much prayer and effort, and reared with such sedulous care, to be thus summarily divided and perhaps in consequence scattered? The missionaries felt



persuaded that their brethren in the United States could not fully appreciate the situation or there would be no such action.

Mr. Talmage again took up his pen in behalf of his Chinese flock. If it had been dipped in his own blood his utterances could not have been more forceful-could not have palpitated with a heartier affection for his Chinese brethren's sake.

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On Dec. 23, 1857, he wrote to Dr. Isaac Ferris, who, since the separation from the A.B.C.F.M. at the last Synod, had become the Corresponding Secretary for the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church.

“So far as we can judge from the report of the proceedings of General Synod as given in the Christian Intelligencer, one of the most important considerations, perhaps altogether the most important mentioned, why the church gathered by us here should not be an integral part of the Church in America, was entirely overlooked. That consideration relates to the unity of Christ’s Church. Will our Church require of us, will she desire that those here who are altogether one, -one in doctrine, one in their views of church order, and one in mutual love, -be violently separated into two denominations? We cannot believe it. Suppose the case of two churches originally distinct, by coming into contact and becoming better acquainted with each other, they find that they hold to the same doctrinal standards, and they explain them in the same manner; they have the same form of church government and their officers are chosen and set apart in the same way; they have the same order of worship and of administering the sacraments; all their customs, civil, social, and religious, are precisely alike, and they love each other dearly; should not such churches unite and form but one denomination? Yet such a supposition does not and cannot represent the circumstances of the churches gathered by us and by our Scotch brethren of the English Presbyterian Church. Our churches originally were one, and still are one, and the question is not whether those churches shall be united, but shall they be separated? Possibly the question will be asked, why were these churches allowed originally to become one? We answer, God made them so, and that without any plan or forethought on our part, and now we thank Him for His blessing that He has made them one, and that He has blessed them because they are one.

“Our position is a somewhat painful one. We desire to give offense to no one, and we do not wish to appear before the Church as disputants. We have no controversy with any one. We have neither the time nor inclination for controversy. We are ‘doing a great work,’ and cannot ‘come down.’ Yet our duty to these churches here and to the Church at home and to our Master demands of us imperatively that we state fully and frankly our views. We have the utmost confidence in our church. We have proved this by endeavoring to get our views fully known.”

The subject did not come up again for discussion before the General Synod until 1863.

Meanwhile the churches grew and multiplied. The Amoy church, which in 1856 had been organized by “the setting apart of elders and deacons,” was separated into two organizations in 1860, “preparatory to the calling of pastors.”

Two men were chosen by the churches in 1861. In 1862 an organization was formed called the “Tai-hoey,” or “Great Elders’ Meeting,” consisting of the missionaries of both the English Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and the delegated elders from all the

organized congregations under their united oversight. The two men chosen as pastors were examined, ordained, and installed by this body.

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During that year Mr. Talmage was called to stand by the “first gash life had cut in the churchyard turf” for him. His beloved wife, Mrs. Abby Woodruff Talmage, was called to her reward, leaving Mr. Talmage with four motherless little ones. He was compelled to go to the United States to secure proper care for his children. He came in time to attend the General Synod of 1863. There he advocated most earnestly the course which the brethren at Amoy had taken.

Dr. Isaac Ferris brought the subject before the Synod in these words:

“In 1857 the Synod met at Ithaca, and a most remarkable Synod it was. According to the testimony of all who were present the Spirit of God unusually manifested His gracious presence. A venerable minister on his return remarked, ‘It was like heaven upon earth.’ That Synod, under this extraordinary sense of the Divine presence and unction, judged that the time had arrived for the Church to take the responsibility of supporting its foreign missionary work upon itself, and, accordingly, in very proper resolutions, asked of the American Board to have the compact which had been in operation since 1832 revoked, and the Mission transferred to our Foreign Board.

“It was at that meeting that a memorial of our brethren at Amoy on the subject of organization, very ably drawn, and presenting fully their views and reasonings, was read and deliberated on. Their work had been wonderfully blessed, and the whole Church was called to thanksgiving, and the time seemed at hand to realize the expectations of years. The brethren asked advice, and the Synod adopted the carefully-drawn report of a committee of which the President was chairman, advising the organization of a Classis at as early a day as was practicable. Our brethren at Amoy were not satisfied with this advice, and considered the subject as not having had a sufficient hearing.

“In the progress of their work they have deemed it proper to form a different organization from what the Synod advised, and which was in harmony with the constant aim of our Church on the subject. The Board of Foreign Missions, when the matter came before them, could only kindly protest and urge upon the brethren the action of the Synod of 1857. Not having ecclesiastical power, they could only argue and advise. They would have it remembered that all has been done in the kindest spirit. They have differed in judgment from the Mission, but not a ripple of unkind feeling has arisen.

“The question now before the Synod is, whether this body will recede from the whole policy of the Church and its action in 1857 or reaffirm the same. This Synod, in its action on this case, will decide for all its missions, and in all time, on what principles their missionaries shall act, and hence this becomes probably the most important question of this session. It is in the highest degree desirable that the Synod should give the subject the fullest the most patient and impartial examination, and that our brother, who represents the Amoy Mission, be fully heard.”

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Mr. Talmage next addressed the Synod and offered the following resolution:

“Resolved, That the Synod hear with gratitude to God of the great progress of the work of the Lord at Amoy, and in the region around, so that already we hear of six organized churches with their Consistories, and others growing up not yet organized, two native pastors who were to have been ordained on the 29th of March last, and the whole under the care of a Classis composed of the missionaries of our Church and of the English Presbyterian Church, the native pastors, and representative elders of the several churches. It calls for our hearty gratitude to the great Head of the Church that the missionaries of different Churches and different countries have been enabled, through Divine grace, to work together in such harmony. It is also gratifying to us that these churches and this Classis have been organized according to the polity of our Church, inasmuch as the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church has approved of the course of their missionaries in uniting for the organizing of a church after our order; therefore, this Synod would direct its Board of Foreign Missions to allow our missionaries to continue their present relations with the missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church, so long as the present harmony shall continue, and no departure shall be made from the doctrines and essential policy of our Church, or until the Synod shall otherwise direct.”

There were speeches for and against, by distinguished men in the Church. Dr. T. W. Chambers, President of the Synod, made the concluding address, as follows:

“If there be any one here who has a deep and tender sympathy with our brother Talmage and his senior missionary colleague (Mr. Doty), I claim to be the man.

“Mr. Doty was my first room-mate at college thirty-one years ago, and ever since we have been fast friends. As to the other, his parents-themselves among the most eminent and devoted Christians ever known-were long members of the church in New Jersey, of which I was formerly in charge. For several years I was his pastor. I signed the testimonials of character required by the American Board before they commissioned him. I pronounced the farewell address when he left this country in 1850. I have watched with intense interest his entire career since, and no one welcomed him more warmly when he returned last year, bearing in his face and form the scars which time and toil had wrought upon his constitution. It is needless to say, then, that I love him dearly for his own sake, for his parents' sake, for his numerous friends' sake, but, more than all, for that Master's sake whom he has so successfully served. Nor is there anything within reason which I would not have the Church do for him. He shall have our money, our sympathy, our prayers, our confidence-the largest liberty in shaping the operations of the Mission he belongs to.



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“But when we come to the matter now at issue, I pause. Much as I love our brother, I love Christ more. Nor can I surrender, out of deference to our missionaries, the constitution, the policy, the interests of our Church,—all of which are involved in this matter. Nay, even their own welfare, and that of the mission they are so tenderly attached to, demand that we should deny their request. What is this request? That we should allow our brethren at Amoy, together with the English Presbyterian missionaries there, to form with the native pastors and the delegates from the native churches, an independent Classis or Presbytery, over whose proceedings this body should have no control whatever, by way of appeal, or review, or in any other form. Now, the first objection to this is, that it is flatly in the face of our constitution and order. A ‘self-regulating Classis’ is a thing which has never been heard of in the Dutch Church since that Church had a beginning. It is against every law, principle, canon, example, and precedent in our books. Perhaps the most marked feature of our polity is the subordination of all parts of our body, large or small, to the review and control of the whole as expressed in the decisions of its highest ecclesiastical assembly. I submit that this Synod has no right to form or to authorize any such self regulating ecclesiastical body, or to consent that any ministers of our Church should hold seats in such a body. If we do it, we transcend the most liberal construction which has ever been known to be given to the powers of General Synod. How, then, can we do this thing? Whatever our sympathies, how can we violate our own order, our fundamental principles, the polity to which we are bound by our profession, by our subscription, by every tie which can bind religious and honorable men?

“Moreover, the thing we are asked to do contravenes our missionary policy from the beginning. As far back as 1832, when we made a compact with the American Board, one essential feature of the plan was that we should have ‘an ecclesiastical organization’ of our own. Without this feature that plan would never have been adopted; and the apprehension that there might be some interference with this cherished principle was at least one of the reasons why the plan, after working successfully for a quarter of a century, was at length abrogated. And so when, in 1857, we instituted a missionary board of our own, this view was distinctly announced.

“It was my privilege to draw up the report on the subject which has been so often referred to. That report did not express merely my view, or that of the committee, but the view of the entire Synod. Nor from that day to this has there been heard anywhere within our bounds even a whisper of objection from minister, elder, or layman in regard to the positions then taken. It is our settled, irreversible policy. Deep down in the heart of the Church lies the conviction that our missionaries, who carry to the heathen the

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doctrine of Christ as we have received it, must also carry the order of Christ as we have received it. Certain unessential peculiarities may, from the force of circumstances, be left in abeyance for a time, or even permanently, but the dominant features must be retained. It is not enough to have genuine Consistories, we must have genuine Classes. And, under whatever modifications, the substantive elements of our polity must be reproduced in the mission churches established by the blessing of God upon the men and means furnished by our Zion.

“Further, Mr. President, it is to be remembered that we are acting for all time. It is not this one case that is before us. We are settling a precedent which is to last for generations. Relax your constitutions and laws for this irregularity and you open a gap through which a coach and four may be driven. Every other mission, under the least pretext, will come and claim the same or a similar modification in their case, and you cannot consistently deny them. The result will be an ecclesiastical chaos throughout our entire missionary field. Let us begin as we mean to hold out. Let us settle this question now and settle it aright. We direct our missionaries what Gospel to preach, what sacraments to administer, what internal organization to give to single churches. Let us, in the same manner and for the same reasons, say what sort of bonds shall unite these churches to each other and govern their mutual relations and common interests.

“I know we are told that the hybrid organization which now exists is every way sufficient and satisfactory; that it is the fruit of Christian love, and that to disturb it would be rending the body of Christ. Here one might ask how it came to exist at all, seeing that this Synod spoke so plainly and unambiguously in 1857. And I for one cordially concur in the remark of the Elder Schieffelin, that the brethren there ‘deserve censure.’ We do not censure them, nor do we propose to do so, but that they deserve it is undeniable. But the point is, how can our disapproval of the mongrel Classis mar the peace of the Amoy brethren? There is already a division among their churches. Some are supported by our funds, others by the funds of the English Presbyterians. Would it alter matters much to say, and to make it a fact, that some of those churches belong to a Classis and others to a Presbytery? Some have an American connection and others an English. But this would break Christian unity! Would it, indeed? You observed, Mr. President, the affectionate confidence, blended with reverence, with which I addressed from the chair the venerable Dr. Skinner. The reason was that we both belong to an association of ministers in New York which meets weekly for mutual fellowship, enjoyment, and edification in all things bearing on ministerial character and duties. Ecclesiastically we have no connection whatever. I never saw his Presbytery in session, and I doubt if he ever saw our Classis; yet our brotherly, Christian, and even ministerial communion is as tender, and sacred, and profitable as if we had been copresbyters for twenty years. Now, who dare say that this shall not exist at Amoy? Our brethren there can maintain precisely the same love, and confidence, and co-

operation as they do now, in all respects save the one of regular, formal, ecclesiastical organization.



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“But I will not detain the Synod longer. I would not have left the chair to speak, but for the overwhelming importance of the subject. It is painful to deny the eager and earnest wishes of our missionary brethren, but I believe we are doing them a real kindness by this course. Union churches here have always in the end worked disunion, confusion, and every evil work. There is no reason to believe that the result would be at all different abroad. A division would necessarily come at some period, and the longer it was delayed, the more trying and sorrowful it would be. I am opposed, therefore, to the substitute offered by Brother Chapman, and also to that of Brother Talmage, and trust that the original resolutions, with the report, will be adopted. That report contains not a single harsh or unpleasant word. It treats the whole case with the greatest delicacy as well as thoroughness, but it reaffirms the action of 1857 in a way not to be mistaken. And that is the ground on which the Church will take its stand. Whatever time, indulgence, or forbearance can be allowed to our brethren, will cheerfully be granted. Only let them set their faces in the direction of a distinct organization, classical as well as consistorial, and we shall be satisfied. Only let them recognize the principle and the details shall be left to themselves, under the leadings of God’s gracious providence.”

The report of the Committee on Foreign Missions, E. S. Porter, D.D., chairman, was adopted. Part of it reads as follows:

“The missionaries there have endeared their names to the whole Christian world, and especially to that household of faith of which they are loved and honored members.”

.... “No words at our command can tell what fond and flaming sympathies have overleaped broad oceans, and bound them and us together.

“Words, like nature, half reveal,  
And half conceal the soul within.”

.... “Your committee are unable to see how it will be possible to carry the sympathies and the liberalities of the Church with an increasing tide of love and sacrifice in support of our missionary work, if it once be admitted as a precedent, or established as a rule, that our missionaries may be allowed to form abroad whatever combinations they may choose, and aid in creating ecclesiastical authorities, which supersede the authorities which commissioned them and now sustain them.”

“The committee are not prepared to recommend that any violent and coercive resolutions should be adopted for the purpose of constraining our brethren in Amoy to a course of procedure which would rudely sunder the brotherly ties that unite them with the missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church. But a Christian discretion will enable them, on the receipt of the decision of the present Synod, in this matter now under consideration, to take such initial steps as are necessary to the speedy formation of a Classis.

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“Much must be left to their discretion, prudence and judgment. But of the wish and expectation of this Synod to have their action conform as soon as may be to the resolutions of 1857, your committee think the brethren at Amoy should be distinctly informed. They therefore offer the following:

“I. Resolved, That the General Synod, having adopted and tested its plan of conducting foreign missions, can see no reason for abolishing it; but, on the contrary, believe it to be adapted to the promotion of the best interests of foreign missionary churches, and of the denomination supporting them.

“II. That the Board of Foreign Missions be, and hereby is, instructed to send to our missionaries at Amoy a copy or copies of this report, as containing the well-considered deliverance of the Synod respecting their present relations and future duty.

“III. That the Secretary of the Foreign Board be, and hereby is, directed to send to the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, of London, Convener of the Presbyterian Committee, a copy of this report, with a copy of the action of 1857, and that he inform him by letter of the wishes and expectations of the Synod respecting the ecclesiastical relations which this body desires its churches in Amoy to sustain to it.”

In the report of the Foreign Committee of the English Presbyterian Church for 1863, the following language is used in reference to the Union Chinese Church of Amoy:

“We are hopeful, however, that on further consideration our brethren in America may allow their missionaries in China to continue the present arrangement, at least until such time as it is found that actual difficulties arise in the way of carrying it out. ‘Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,’ and there are few brethren towards whom we feel closer affinity than the members of that Church, which was represented of old by Gomarus and Witsius, by Voet and Marck, and Bernard de Moore, and whose Synod of Dort preceded in time and pioneered in doctrine our own Westminster Assembly. Like them, we love that Presbyterianism and that Calvinism which we hold in common, and we wish to carry them wherever we go; but we fear that it would not be doing justice to either, and that it might compromise that name which is above every other, if, on the shores of China, we were to unfurl a separate standard. We would, therefore, not only respectfully recommend to the Synod to allow its missionaries to unite presbyterially as well as practically with the brethren of the Reformed Dutch Church; but we would express the earnest hope that the Synod of the sister Church in America may find itself at liberty to extend to its missionaries a similar freedom.”

These sentiments were unanimously adopted by the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church.

The cause which Mr. Talmage was advocating was too near his heart, and his convictions were too strong to permit silence. He prepared a pamphlet, setting forth more clearly the position of the Mission at Amoy, as well as answering objections made to it. [The exact standing of missionaries in the Union Chinese Church of Amoy was also explained by Dr. Talmage in a later pamphlet, for the contents of which see Appendix.] A few quotations read:

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“In reference to it, *i.e.*, the report of the Committee on Foreign Missions, we would make three remarks: (1) It (Resolution III.) seems rather a cavalier answer to the fraternal wish of the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church, as expressed in their action. (2) The action of Synod is made to rest (Res. I.) on the fact that Synod had ‘tested’ this ‘plan of conducting foreign missions.’ If this be so, and the plan had been found by experiment unobjectionable, the argument is not without force. But how and where has this test been applied and found so satisfactory? Our Church has three Missions among the heathen—one in India, one in China, and one in Japan. Has it been tested in Japan? No. They have not yet a single native church. Has it been tested in China? If so, the missionaries were not aware of it. The test applied there has been of an opposite character and has been wonderfully successful. The test has only been applied in India, and has only begun to be applied even there. There, as yet, there is but one native pastor. Their Classis is more American than Indian. We must wait until they have a native Classis before the test can be pronounced at all satisfactory. (3) No consideration is had for the feelings, wishes or opinions of the native churches. The inalienable rights of the native churches, their relation to each other, their absolute unity—things of the utmost consequence—are not at all regarded, are entirely ignored.”

In reply to the advantages claimed to flow from the plan advocated by General Synod, Mr. Talmage says:

“1. The most important advantage is, or is supposed to be, that there will thus be higher courts of jurisdiction to which appeals may be made, and by which orthodoxy and good order may be the better secured to the Church at Amoy.

“Such advantages, if they can be thus secured, we would by no means underrate. There sometimes are cases of appeal for which we need the highest court practicable—the collective wisdom of the Church, so far as it can be obtained; and the preservation of orthodoxy and good order is of the first importance. Now, let us see whether the plan proposed will secure these advantages. Let us suppose that one of the brethren feels himself aggrieved by the decision of the Classis of Amoy and appeals to the Particular Synod of Albany, and thence to General Synod. He will not be denied the right to such appeal. But, in order that the appeal may be properly prosecuted and disposed of, the appellant and the representative of Classis should be present in these higher courts. Can this be secured? Is the waste of time, of a year or more, nothing? And where shall the thousands of dollars of necessary expense come from? Now, suppose this appellant to be a Chinese brother. He, also, has rights; but how, on this plan, can he possibly obtain them? Suppose that the money be raised for him and he is permitted to stand on the floor of Synod. He cannot speak, read, or write



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a word of English. Not a member of Synod can speak, read, or write a word of his language, except it be the brother prosecuting him. I ask, is it possible for him thus to obtain justice? But, waiving all these disadvantages, the only point on which there is the least probability that an appeal of a Chinese brother would come up before the higher courts, are points on which these higher courts would not be qualified to decide. They would doubtless grow out of the peculiar customs and laws of the Chinese, points on which the missionary, after he has been on the ground a dozen years, often feels unwilling to decide, and takes the opinion of the native elders in preference to his own. Is it right to impose a yoke like this on that little Church which God is gathering, by your instrumentality, in that far-off land of China? But it is said that these cases of appeal will very rarely or never happen. Be it so; then this supposed advantage will seldom or never occur, and, if it should occur, it would prove a disadvantage.”

In regard to keeping the Church pure in doctrine:

“Sure I am that the Church in China cannot be kept pure by legislation on this, the opposite side of the globe. But we expect Christ to reign over and the Holy Spirit to be given to the Churches, and the proper ecclesiastical bodies formed of them in China, as well as in this land. Why not? Such are the promises of God. The way to secure these things is by prayer and the preaching of the pure Gospel, not by legislation. Let the Church be careful in her selection of missionaries. Send only such as she has confidence in—men of God, sound in faith, apt to teach—and then trust them, or recall them. Don’t attempt to control them contrary to their judgment. Strange if this, which is so much insisted on as the policy of our Church, be right, that she cannot get a single man, of all she sends out to China, to think so. Can it be that the missionary work is so subversive of right reason, or of correct judgment, or of conscientiousness, that all become perverted by engaging in it?

“2. Another supposed advantage is the effect it will have in enlisting the sympathies of the Church in behalf of the Mission at Amoy. Our people do not first ask whether it be building ourselves up, before they sympathize with a benevolent object. We believe the contrary is the exact truth. It requires a liberal policy to call forth liberal views and actions. As regards the enlisting of men, look at the facts. Every man who has gone out from among you to engage in this missionary work begs of you not to adopt a narrow policy. So in regard to obtaining of funds. Usually the men who are most liberal in giving are most liberal in feeling.

.... “However powerful the motive addressed to the desire to build up our own Church, there are motives infinitely more powerful. Such are the motives to be depended upon in endeavoring to elevate the standard of liberality among our people. If our people have not yet learned, they should be taught to engage in the work of evangelizing the world, not for the sake of our Church in America, but for the sake of Christ and His

Church, and when the Church thus built up is like our own they should be fully satisfied. We believe they will be satisfied with this.



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“Now let us consider the real or supposed evils of carrying out the decision of Synod.

“1. It will not be for the credit of our Church. She now has a name, with other Churches, for putting forth efforts to evangelize the world. Shall she mar this good name and acquire one for sectarianism, by putting forth efforts to extend herself, not her doctrines and order—they are not sectarian, and her missionaries esteem them as highly as do their brethren at home—but herself, even at the cost of dividing churches which the grace of God has made one? The decision of the last Synod may not be the result of sectarianism among the people of our Church. We do not think it is. But it will be difficult to convince our Presbyterian brethren and others that it is not so. By way of illustration I will suppose a case. A. is engaged in a very excellent work. B. comes to him, and the following dialogue ensues:

“B. ‘Friend A., I am glad to see you engaged in so excellent a work. I also have concluded to engage in it. I should be glad to work with you. You know the proverbs, ‘Union is strength,’ and ‘Two are better than one.’

“A. ‘Yes, yes, friend B., I know these proverbs and believe them as thoroughly as you do. But I have a few peculiarities about my way of working. They are not many, and they are not essential, but I think they are very useful, and wish to work according to them. Therefore, I prefer working alone.’

“B. ‘Yes, friend A., we all have our peculiarities, and, if they be not carried too far, they may all be made useful. I have been making inquiries about yours, and I am glad to find they are not nearly so many, or so different from mine, as you suppose, and as I once supposed. The fact is, I rather like some of them, and though I may not esteem them all as highly as you do, still I am willing to conform to them; for I am fully persuaded that, in work of this kind, two working together can do vastly more than two working separately, and the work will be much better done. Besides this, the social intercourse will be delightful.’

“A. ‘I appreciate, friend B., your politeness, and am well aware that all you say about the greater efficiency and excellence of united work and the delights of social intercourse is perfectly true. But—but—well, I prefer to work alone.’

“2. It will injure the efficiency of the Church at Amoy. Besides the objection furnished by the increase of denominations, which the heathen will thus, as readily as the irreligious in this country, be able to urge against Christianity, it will deprive the churches of the benefit of the united wisdom and strength of the whole of them for self-cultivation and for Christian enterprise, and will introduce a spirit of jealous rivalry among them. We know it is said that there need be no such result, and that the native churches may remain just as united in spirit after the organization of two denominations as before. Such a sentiment takes for granted, either that ecclesiastical organization has in fact no efficiency, or that the Chinese churches have arrived at a far higher state of

sanctification than the churches have attained to in this land. Do not different denominations exhibit jealous rivalry in this land? Is Chinese human nature different from American?



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“In consequence of such division the native Churches will not be so able to support the Gospel among themselves. Look at the condition of our Western towns in this respect. Why strive to entail like evils on our missionary churches? ....

“But may not the Church change or improve her decisions? Here is one of the good things we hope to see come out of this mistake of the Church. Jesus rules, and He is ordering all things for the welfare of His Church and the advancement of His cause. Sometimes, the better to accomplish this end, He permits the Church to make mistakes. When we failed in former days to get our views made public, it gave us no anxiety, for we believed the doctrine that Jesus reigns. So we now feel, notwithstanding this mistake. The Master will overrule it for good. We do not certainly know how, but we can imagine one way. By means of this mistake the matter may be brought before our Church, and before other Churches, more clearly than it would otherwise have been for many years to come, and in consequence of this we expect, in due time, that our Church, instead of coming up merely to the standard of liberality for which we have been contending, will rise far above anything we have asked for or even imagined, and other Churches will also raise their standard higher. Hereafter we expect to contend for still higher principles. This is the doctrine. Let all the branches of the great Presbyterian family in the same region in any heathen country, which are sound in the faith, organize themselves, if convenient, into one organic whole, allowing liberty to the different parts in things non-essential. Let those who adopt Dutch customs, as at Amoy, continue, if they see fit, their peculiarities, and those who adopt other Presbyterian customs, as at Ningpo and other places, continue their peculiarities, and yet all unite as one Church. This subject does not relate simply to the interests of the Church at Amoy. It relates to the interests of all the missionary work of all the churches of the Presbyterian order in all parts of the world. Oh, that our Church might take the lead in this catholicity of spirit, instead of falling back in the opposite direction—that no one may take her crown! But if she do not, then we trust some other of the sacramental hosts will take the lead and receive, too, the honor, for it is for the glory of the great Captain of our salvation and for the interests of His kingdom. We need the united strength of all these branches of Zion for the great work which the Master has set before us in calling on us to evangelize the world. In expecting to obtain this union, will it be said that we are looking for a chimera? It ought to be so, ought it not? Then it is no chimera. It may take time for the Churches to come up to this standard, but within a few years we have seen tendencies to union among different branches of the Presbyterian family in Australia. In Canada, in our own country, and in England and Scotland. In many places these tendencies are stronger now than they have ever before been since the days of the Reformation.



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“True, human nature is still compassed with infirmities even in the Church of Christ. But the day of the world’s regeneration is approaching, and as it approaches nearer to us, doubtless the different branches of the Presbyterian family will approach still nearer to each other. God hasten the time, and keep us also from doing anything to retard, but everything to help it forward, and to His name be the praise forever. Amen.”

So strong was the feeling of the entire Amoy Mission, that in September, 1863, the following communication was sent to the Board of Foreign Missions:

“Dear Brethren: We received from you on the 22d ultimo the action taken by the General Synod at its recent session at Newburgh with regard to the proposed organization of a Classis at Amoy. Did we view this step in the light in which Synod appears to have regarded it, we should need in this communication to do no more than signify our intention to carry out promptly the requirements of Synod; but we regret to say that such is not the case, and that Synod, in requiring this of us, has asked us to do that which we cannot perform. We feel that Synod must have mistaken our position on this question. It is not that we regard the proposed action as merely inexpedient and unwise; if this were all, we would gladly carry out the commands of Synod, transferring to it the responsibility which it offers to assume. But the light in which we regard it admits of no transfer of responsibility. It is not a matter of judgment only, but also of conscience.

“We conscientiously feel that in confirming such an organization we should be doing a positive injury and wrong to the churches of Christ established at Amoy, and that our duty to the Master and His people here forbids this. Therefore, our answer to the action of General Synod must be and is that we cannot be made the instruments of carrying out the wishes of Synod in this report; and further, if Synod is determined that such an organization must be effected, we can see no other way than to recall us and send hither men who see clearly their way to do that which to us seems wrong.

“We regret the reasons which have led us to this conclusion. We have thought it best that each member of the Mission should forward to you his individual views on this subject, rather than embody them in the present communication.

“We accordingly refer you to these separate statements which will be sent to you as soon as prepared.

“Commending you, dear brethren, to our common Lord, whose servants we all are, and praying that He will guide us into all truth, we are as ever,

“Your brethren in Christ

E. Doty,  
A. Ostrom,

*D. Rapalje,  
Leonard W. Kip,  
Aug. Blauvelt.*

“Amoy, Sept. 16, 1863.”

The last action taken by the General Synod was in June, 1864, and reads as follows:



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“Resolved, That while the General Synod does not deem it necessary or proper to change the missionary policy defined and adopted in 1857, yet, in consideration of the peculiar circumstances of the Mission of Amoy, the brethren there are allowed to defer the formation of a Classis of Amoy until, in their judgment, such a measure is required by the wants and desires of the Churches gathered by them from among the heathen.”

At the Centenary Conference on the Protestant Missions of the World, held in Exeter Hall, London, 1888, Rev. W. J. K. Taylor, D.D., for many years a most efficient member of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America, read a paper on “Union and Cooperation in Foreign Missions,” in which he said:

“Actual union has been happily maintained at Amoy, China, for more than a quarter of a century between the missionaries of the Reformed (Dutch) Church in America and those of the Presbyterian Church of England. Having labored together in the faith of the Gospel, gathering converts into the fold of Christ, and founding native churches, these brethren could not and would not spoil the unity of those infant churches by making two denominations out of one company of believers nor would they sow in that virgin soil the seeds of sectarian divisions which have long sundered the Protestant Churches in Europe and America. The result was the organization of the Tai-Hoey, or Great Council of Elders, which is neither an English Presbytery nor a Reformed Church Classis, but is like them both. It is not an appendage of either of these foreign Churches, but is a genuine independent Chinese Christian Church holding the standards and governed by the polity of the twin-sister Churches that sent them the Gospel by their own messengers. The missionaries retain their relations with their own home Churches and act under commissions of their own Church Board of Missions. They are not settled pastors, but are more like the Apostolic Evangelists of New Testament times,—preachers, teachers, founders of Churches, educators of the native ministry, and superintendents of the general work of evangelization.

“This Tai-Hoey is a child of God, which was ‘born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’ It is believed to be the first ecclesiastical organization for actual union and co-operation in mission lands by the representatives of churches holding the Reformed faith and Presbyterian polity. Its history has already been long enough to give the greatest value to its experience.”

For seven years, by tongue and pen, Mr. Talmage advocated the establishment of an independent Chinese Union Church of the Presbyterian order. Even then the Reformed Church was not fully persuaded and did not give her hearty assent. The resolution of 1864 was only tentative. It was a plea for toleration. This was not strange. It was one of the earliest efforts, if not the earliest, for church union and separate autonomy on heathen soil. It was a new departure. But the battle was really won. The question was never broached again. The strongest opponents then are the warmest friends of union and autonomy now. Thirty years of happiest experience, of hearty endorsement by

native pastors and foreign missionaries are sufficient testimony to the wisdom of the steps then taken.



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In November, 1864, Mr. Talmage married Miss Mary E. Van Deventer, and forthwith proceeded to China, where he arrived early in 1865.

In 1867, Rutgers College, New Jersey, recognized Mr. Talmage's successful and scholarly labors in China for a period of full twenty years, by giving him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

### **X. THE ANTI-MISSIONARY AGITATION.**

Prince Kung, at Sir Rutherford Alcock's parting interview with him in 1869, said: "Yes, we have had a great many discussions, but we know that you have always endeavored to do justice, and if you could only relieve us of missionaries and opium, there need be no more trouble in China."

He spoke the mind of the officials, literati, and the great masses of the people. Heathenism is incarnate selfishness. How can a Chinese understand that men will turn their backs on the ancestral home, travel ten thousand miles with no other object but to do his countrymen good? The natural Chinaman cannot receive it. He suspects us. And he has enough to pillow his suspicion on. Let him turn the points of the compass. He sees the great North-land in the hands of Russia. He sees the Spaniard tyrannizing over the Philippine Islanders. He sees Holland dominating the East Indies. He sees India's millions at the feet of the British lion. "What are these benevolent-looking barbarians tramping up and down the country for? Why are they establishing churches and schools and hospitals? They are trying to buy our hearts by their feigned kindness, and hand us over to some Western monarch ere long." So reasons our unsophisticated Chinese. He is heartily satisfied with his own religion or utterly indifferent to any religion. He has no ear for any new doctrine except as a curiosity, to give momentary amusement, and then to be thrown to the ground like a child's toy.

The missionary appears on the scene in dead earnest. "Agitation is our profession." We are among those "who are trying to turn the world upside down."

The Spirit of God touches and dissolves the apathy, melts the ice, breaks the stone, and we see men alive unto God; "old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." What a change in the recipient of God's grace.

A change, too, takes place in him who resists. Icy apathy becomes burning, bitter hatred. The whole enginery of iniquity is set in motion to sweep off this strange foreign propaganda. Malicious placards are posted before every yamen and temple. Basest stories are retailed. "The barbarians dig out men's eyes and cut out men's hearts to make medicine of them." The thirst for revenge is engendered, until, like an unleashed tiger, the mob springs upon the missionary's home, and returns not till its thirst has been

slaked with the blood of the righteous. That is the dark shadow hanging over missionary life in nearly every part of the Chinese Empire.

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We have had no name to add to the foreign missionary martyr list, from the region of Amoy.

Chinese martyrs there may have been. Men who have endured the lifelong laceration of taunt and sneer and suffered the loss of well nigh all things, there have been not a few. Though the fires of persecution have burned with fiercer intensity in other parts of China, yet we have not escaped having our garments singed in some of their folds.

Perhaps the most widespread anti-missionary uprising in China occurred during the years 1870 and 1871.

It was during the summer of 1870 that Dr. Talmage was compelled to go to Chefoo, North China, for much-needed rest and change.

On August 8th he wrote to Dr. J. M. Ferris:

“The next day after my arrival at Chefoo the news was received of the terrible massacre at Tientsin on June 21st. (Tientsin is the port of Peking, and has a population of upwards of one million.) Nine Sisters of Charity, one foreign priest, the French consul and other French officials and subjects, and three Russians—in all, twenty-one Europeans—were massacred. Many of them were horribly mutilated. Especially is this true of all the Sisters. Their private residences and public establishments, as well as all the Protestant chapels within the city, were destroyed.”

Not long after, the American Presbyterian Mission at Tung chow, Shantung Province, North China, was broken up, for fear of an intended massacre. The missionaries were helped to Chefoo by two vessels sent by the British Admiral, Sir Henry Kellet.

At Canton, vile stories about foreigners distributing poisonous pills were gotten up, and such was the seriousness of the crisis that two German missionaries had to flee for their lives, one having his mission premises utterly destroyed. A people whose credulity is most amazingly developed by feeding on fairy tales and demon adventures from their childhood, are prepared to believe anything about the “ocean barbarians” whose name is never spoken without mingled fear and hatred and suspicion.

The ferment, started at Canton, spread along the coast. The people of Amoy were inoculated with the virus.

On the 22d of September, 1871, Dr. Talmage addressed a letter to General Le Gendre, U. S. Consul at Amoy, informing him of the state of affairs in and about Amoy. The missionary knowing the language and having constant dealings with the people would be more likely to know the extent and gravity of any conspiracy against foreigners than the Consul. A part of the letter reads:



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“In July last inflammatory placards were extensively posted throughout the region about Canton, stating that foreigners had imported a large quantity of poison and had hired vagabond Chinese to distribute it among the people; that only foreigners had the antidote to this poison and that they refused to administer it, except for large sums of money or to such persons as embraced the foreigner’s religion. In the latter part of July some of these placards and letters accompanying them were received by Chinese at Amoy from their Canton friends. They were copied, with changes to suit this region, and extensively circulated. The man who seems to have been most active in their circulation was the Cham-hu, the highest military official at Amoy under the Admiral. He united with the Hai-hong, a high civil official, in issuing a proclamation, warning the people to be on their guard against poison, which wicked people were circulating. This proclamation was not only circulated in the city of Amoy, but also in the country around.

“It did not mention foreigners, but the people by some other means were made to understand that foreigners were meant. The district Magistrate of the city of Chiang-chiu issued a proclamation informing the people of the danger of poison, especially against poison in their wells. Two days later he issued another proclamation, reiterating his warnings, and informing the people that he had arrested and examined a man who confessed that he, with three others, had been employed by foreigners to engage in this work of poisoning the people.

“Their especial business was to poison all the wells. This so-called criminal was speedily executed.

“A few days afterwards a military official at Chiang-chiu also issued a proclamation to warn the people against poison, and giving the confession of the above-mentioned criminal with great particularity. The criminal is made to say that a few months ago he had been decoyed and sold to foreigners. In company with more than fifty others—he was conveyed by ship to Macao. There they were distributed among the foreign hong, one to each hong. (Hong is pigeon English for business house.)

“That afterwards he with three others was sent home, being furnished with poison for distribution, and with special direction to poison all the wells on their way. They were to refer all those on whom the poison took effect to a certain individual at Amoy, who would heal them gratuitously, only requiring of them their names. This, doubtless, is an allusion to the hospital for the Chinese at Amoy, where the names of the patients are of course recorded and they receive medicine and medical attendance gratuitously.

“In this confession foreigners are designated by the opprobrious epithet of ‘little’—that is, contemptible—‘demons.’ This, by the way, is a phrase never used to designate foreigners in this region except by those in the mandarin offices. Besides the absurdity of charging foreigners with distributing poison, the whole confession bears the evidence not only of falsehood, but, if ever made, of having been put into the man’s mouth by

those inside the mandarin offices and forced from him by torture, for the express purpose of exciting the intensest hatred against foreigners.



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“In consequence, excitement and terror and hatred to foreigners, and consequently to native Christians, became most intense, and extended from the cities far into the country around. Wells were fenced in and put under lock and cover. People were called together by the beating of gongs to draw water. The buckets were covered in carrying water to guard against the throwing in of poison along the streets. At the entrances of some villages notices were posted warning strangers not to enter lest they be arrested as poisoners. In various places men were arrested and severely beaten on suspicion, merely because they were strangers. The native Christians everywhere were subjected to much obloquy and sometimes to imminent danger, charged with being under the influence of foreigners and employed by them to distribute poison.

“Even at the Amoy hospital, which has been in existence nearly thirty years, the number of patients greatly decreased; some days there were almost none.”

In the large cities of Tong-an and Chinchew placards were posted in great numbers. They averred that black and red pills were being sold by the agents of foreigners under presence of curing disease and saving the world.

Instead they were causes of terrible diseases which none but the foreign dogs or their agents could cure. And to get cured, one must join the foreign religion or else give great sums. It was asserted that all this poison emanated from the foreign chapels, was often thrown into wells, and secretly put into fish or other food in the markets.

A preacher, sixty miles from Foochow, one hundred and fifty miles north of Amoy, barely escaped with his life. He was pounded with stones while the bystanders called out, “Kill the poisoner, the foreign devils’ poisoner!”

The whole object of this diabolical calumniating was to kindle the people into a frenzy against foreigners, especially missionaries, and to make foreign powers believe that the people are so anti-foreign that the authorities cannot secure a foreigner’s safety outside of the treaty ports.

Even when these reports were traveling like wildfire there were those among the Chinese who knew better, and it was often said, “It cannot be the missionaries and native Christians, for have they not been going in and out among us all these years and they never did us any harm?”

Speaking of the “Political State of the Country,” Dr. Talmage says:

“With the atrocities committed at Tientsin the world is acquainted, though many seem still to be under the grievous error that these atrocities were designed only against Romanism and the French nation.



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“If this were the fact, it would be no justification. Others are under an error equally grievous, that the Chinese Government has given reasonable redress. It has given no proper redress at all. Instead of reprobating the massacre, it has almost, and doubtless to the ideas of the Chinese, fully sanctioned it. The leaders in the massacre have not been brought to justice. The Government has readily given life for life—a very easy matter in China—but it has so highly rewarded the families of the victims thus sacrificed to placate the barbarians, and put so much honor on the corpses of these martyrs to foreign demands, that it has encouraged similar atrocities whenever a suitable time shall arrive for their perpetration. The Imperial proclamation stating even this unsatisfactory redress, which the Government solemnly promised should be published throughout the land, has not been published except in a few instances where foreigners have compelled it. The massacre at Tientsin is known throughout the empire, but it is not known generally that any redress at all has been given.

“Instead of the publication of this proclamation the vilest calumnies—too vile to be even mentioned in Christian ears—have been circulated secretly, but widely throughout the land. Throughout the coast provinces of this southern half of the empire the people have been warned of a grand poisoning scheme gotten up by foreigners for the destruction of the Chinese.

“Because the foreign residents in China report the truth in regard to the feeling of hatred to foreigners, and warn the nations of the West of the coming war and designed extirpation of all foreigners, for which China is assuredly preparing with all its might, we are charged as being desirous of bringing on war. We know that the Church will not impute such motives to her missionaries. But the testimony of missionaries agrees in this respect with that of other foreign residents. We see the evidence, as we walk the streets, in the countenances and demeanor of the literati and officials, and somewhat in the countenances and demeanor of the masses.

“We see it in the changed policy of the local magistrates toward the Christians; we learn it from rumors which are circulated from time to time among the people; we see it in the activity manifested in forming a proper navy and in preparing the army.

“We learn it from the secret communications, some of which have reached the light, passing to and fro between the Imperial Government and the higher local authorities, and we fear that we have another proof in the barbarous treatment of a shipwrecked crew some two weeks ago along the coast a little to the north of Amoy.

“A British mercantile steamer ran ashore in a fog. She was unarmed. The natives soon gathered in force and attacked the vessel. The people on board attempted to escape in their boats. These boats were afterwards attacked by a large fleet of fishing-boats and separated.



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“One boat’s company were taken ashore, stripped naked, wounded, and robbed of everything. They finally made their way overland to Amoy. The other three boats, after the crew and passengers had been stripped and robbed, were let go to sea. They providentially fell in with a steamer which took them to Foochow. Such atrocities were once common here.

“We do not believe that any large proportion of the foreign residents in China wish war. We do wish, however, the rights secured to us by treaty. These, with a proper policy, can be secured without war. We wish most heartily to avoid war. Besides all its other evils it would be a sad thing for our work and our churches. We still hope that God in His providence will ward it off. He will do it in answer to our prayers if so it be best for His cause. This is our only hope, and it is sufficient.”

The threatening war cloud did blow over, and a restraint, at least temporary, was laid upon the officials and the people in their treatment of foreigners.

### **XI. THE LAST TWO DECADES.**

Dr. Talmage was a man of strong convictions, at the same time possessed of a spirit of genuine catholicity. The brethren connected with the London and English Presbyterian Missions recognized him as a true friend. In his later years he became the Nestor of the three Missions, the venerated patriarch, the trusted counselor.

It will not be inappropriate to give two letters expressive of his good-will toward his fellow laborers. The one was written on the occasion of Rev. John Stronach’s return to England:

### **FORTY CONTINUOUS YEARS IN HEATHENISM.**

“March 16, 1876. Today we said farewell to the veteran missionary, Rev. John Stronach.

“He has been laboring many years at this place in connection with the London Missionary Society. This morning he left us for his native land by a new route.

“Each of the three Missions has one or more boats employed exclusively in carrying missionaries and native preachers on their trips to and from the various outstations accessible by water. These boats are called by the native Christians ‘hok-im-chun,’ which means ‘Gospel boat.’ Mr. Stronach embarked on one of these ‘Gospel boats.’ He expected to land at one of the Mission stations on the mainland northeast from Amoy, and then travel overland on foot or by sedan-chair to Foochow. He will spend the remaining nights of this week and the Sabbath at various stations under the care of the Missions at Amoy, and say some parting words to the native Christians.



“He expects early next week to meet one of the Methodist missionaries of Foochow, and in company with him to pass on to that city, spending the nights at stations under the care of the Foochow Missions. We may now travel overland from Amoy to Foochow (a distance of one hundred and fifty miles) and spend every night, sometimes take our noonday meals, at a Christian chapel. Does this look as if missions were a failure in this region? At Foochow Mr. Stronach will take steamer for Shanghai, thence to Yokohama and San Francisco.

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“All the missionaries of Amoy and many Chinese Christians accompanied Mr. Stronach to the boat. It is very sad to say farewell to those with whom we have been long and pleasantly associated.

“Mr. Stronach left England in 1837, thirty-nine years ago, to labor as a missionary in the East Indies.

“He came to Amoy in 1844, shortly after this port was opened to foreign commerce and missionary labor. He was soon sent to Shanghai as one of the Committee of Delegates on the translation of the Scriptures into the Chinese language. If he had done nothing more for China than his share in this great work, the benefit would have been incalculable. After the completion of this work in 1853, he returned to Amoy, where he has labored continuously, with the exception of a short visit a few years ago to Hongkong and Canton, and a shorter one last year to Foochow. Very rarely has he been interrupted in his work by illness. In the history of modern missions few instances can be found of missionaries who have been permitted to labor uninterruptedly for nearly forty years, not even taking one furlough home.

“In the case of Mr. Stronach the language concerning Moses may be literally applied, ‘His eye is not dim, nor his natural force abated.’ He does not yet have occasion to use spectacles, and the route he has taken proves him still full of mental and physical vigor. Think of the discoveries and inventions during the last forty years! Will Mr. Stronach recognize his native land? The good hand of the Lord be with him and make his remaining years as happy as his past ones have been useful.”

The other letter, to Rev. John M. Ferris, D.D., was written on the occasion of the death of the Rev. Carstairs Douglas, LL.D., one of the most accomplished and scholarly men ever sent to any mission field:

*“August 8, 1877.*

“By this mail we have sad news to send. It relates to the death of Rev. Carstairs Douglas, LL.D., of the English Presbyterian Mission at Amoy. He was the senior member of that Mission, having arrived at Amoy, July, 1855, twenty-two years ago.

“Dr. Douglas, two weeks ago to-day, was in apparent good health. On that day he made calls on several members of the foreign community. To some of them he remarked, concerning his health, that he had never felt better. That evening he was in his usual place in our weekly prayer-meeting. The next morning at four o’clock he began to feel unwell, but did not wish to disturb others, so called no one until about half past six. Then some medicine was given him and he sat down at his study-table for the morning reading of his Hebrew Bible. About an hour after this he became much worse and the doctor was sent for. On his arrival the physician pronounced his disease to be cholera of the most virulent type, and the case to be almost without hope of recovery.



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“In consequence of our long and close intimacy word was soon sent to me. I hastened to see him. He was already very weak and could not converse without great effort. Everything was done for him that could be done. But he continued failing until about a quarter before six in the afternoon, July 26th, when he breathed his last. He knew what his disease was and what would probably be its termination, but evidently the King of Terrors had no terror for him. His end was peace. He retained his consciousness nearly to the last.

“He was to have preached in our English chapel to the foreign community on the following Sabbath morning. He told us his text was Romans vi. 23, ‘The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ The text was so suitable to the occasion that I took it, and in his place on the next Sabbath morning preached his funeral sermon from his own text.

“By overwork he had worn himself out, and made himself an old man while he was yet comparatively young in years. He came to China quite young and at the time of his death was only about forty-six years of age, and yet men who had recently become acquainted with him thought him over sixty. Is any one inclined to blame him too much for this, as though he wore himself out and sacrificed his life before the time? If so, he did it in a good cause and for a good Master. Besides this, he did more work during the twenty-two years of his missionary life than the most of men accomplish in twice that time. And then, he reminds us of One, who when only a little over thirty years of age, from similar causes, seems to have acquired the appearance of nearly fifty (John viii. 57).

“Recently, especially during the last year, it was manifest, at least to others, that his physical strength was fast giving way. Yet he could not be prevailed upon to leave his field for a season for temporary rest, or even to lessen the amount of his work.

“I never knew a more incessant worker. He was a man of most extensive general information. I think I have never met with his equal in this respect. He was acquainted with several modern European languages and was a thorough student of the original languages of Holy Scripture, as witness the fact of his study of the Hebrew Bible, even after his last sickness had commenced. As regards the Chinese language, he was already taking his place among the first sinologues of the land. We were indebted more to him, perhaps, than to any other one man for the success of the recent General Missionary Conference (at Shanghai).

[At this first General Conference of the Protestant missionaries of China, held at Shanghai in May, 1877, Dr. Talmage preached the opening sermon and read a paper, the title of which was, “Should the native churches in China be united ecclesiastically and independent of foreign churches and societies?”]

“As a member of the Committee of Arrangements he labored indefatigably by writing letters and in other ways to make it a success, and though comparatively so young, he well deserved the honor bestowed on him in making him one of the presidents of that body. 'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?'



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“This is a great blow to the English Presbyterian Mission in this place. It is also, because of the intimate relations of the two missions and the oneness of the churches under our care, a great blow to us. It is a great blow to the whole mission work in China—greater, perhaps, than the loss of any other man. You will not wonder that I, from my long intimacy with him, feel the loss deeply, more and more deeply every day and week, as the days and weeks pass away without him.”

### CHINESE GRANDILOQUENCE.

An episode in connection with the visit to China in 1878 of Dr. Jacob Chamberlain, of the Arcot Mission, is described in a letter to Dr. Goyn Talmage, as follows:

“Dear Goyn: I suppose I told you about the pleasant visit we had from Dr. Chamberlain and family. The Doctor went with me to Chiang-chiu. While there his carpet-bag was stolen out of the boat. We reported the case to a military officer, and told him that we wanted the bag very much, and if he could get it for us, we should make no trouble about having the thief punished. In a few days after our return to Amoy the bag was sent to us with all its contents complete. We bought an umbrella—a nice silk one—and sent it up to the officer as a present. Perhaps you would like to see a translation of the letter he sent in reply. It will illustrate Chinese politeness. The letter reads as follows:

“When the flocks of wild geese make their orderly flight,—the glorious autumnal season deserving of laudation,—my thoughts wander far away to you, Teacher Talmage, whose noble presence is worthy to be saluted with bow profound, and whose dignified manners invite to close intimacy. Alas, that our acquaintance should have been formed at this late day!—and that, too, when, by wafting and by the plying of oars, having arrived at ‘the stream of the fragrant grain fields’ (poetic name for the region of Chiang-chiu), you met with the mishap of doggish thieves taking advantage of your want of watchfulness! Truly, the blame of this rests on me. How, then, can I have the hardihood to receive from you a present of value! A reward of demerit, how can I endure it! During the three stages of life, (youth, middle age, and old age,) I shall not be able to repay. It is only by inheritance (not by my own merit) that I obtained the imperial favor of office. Thus, my deficiency in the knowledge of official laws and governmental regulations has subjected you to fear and anxiety. Shame on me in the extreme! shame in the extreme! Only by the greatest stretch could I hope to meet with forbearance, how then could you take trouble and manifest kindness by sending a present. Writing cannot exhaust my words, and words can not exhaust my meaning. It will be necessary to come and express my thanks in person. Such are my supplications and such is my sense of obligation. May there be golden peace to you, Teacher Talmage, and will your excellency please bestow your brilliant glance on what I have written!”

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“Is not that a specimen of humility? The stealing was because of his neglect of duty, and his neglect of duty was because of inability, having obtained his office through the merit of his father or grandfather. Of course he kept the umbrella.”

August 18, 1887, marked the fortieth anniversary of Dr. Talmage’s arrival in China. He said so little about it, however, that it was not known by the friends of the other missions until the very day dawned.

The members of the English Presbyterian Mission—ladies and gentlemen—immediately concluded to secure some suitable memento expressive of their regard for Dr. Talmage and his work. A set of Macaulay’s History of England, bound in tree calf, and a finely bound copy of the latest edition of the Royal Atlas, were sent for. In connection with the presentation the following letter from Rev. W. McGregor was read:

“Amoy, April 3, 1888.

“Dear Dr. Talmage:

“When on the 18th of last August we learned that that day was the fortieth anniversary of your arrival in China, the news came upon us unexpectedly. We wished we had had more forethought and kept better count of the years, so that we might have made more of the occasion. Each of us felt a desire to present you with some token of our regard, and it seemed to us for many reasons best that we should do so unitedly as members of the English Presbyterian Mission in Amoy. We had at the time nothing suitable to offer you, but we agreed on certain books to be sent for,—not as having any special relations to the work in which you have been engaged, but as being each a standard work of its kind. The books have now arrived, and I have much pleasure in sending them to you as something that may be kept in your family as a memorial of the day and a small token of our high esteem for yourself personally and of the great value we attach to the work you have done in the service of our common Lord.

“I am, yours truly,

“Wm. McGregor.

“On behalf of the members of the English Presbyterian Mission, Amoy.”

Dr. Talmage was blessed with a most vigorous physical constitution, but years of struggle with one of the complaints peculiar to the tropics, finally compelled his retirement from the Mission field.

In the summer of 1889, Dr. and Mrs. Talmage embarked on the steamship Arabia for the United States. Dr. Talmage turned his face to the old home-village, Bound Brook, New Jersey, all the time cherishing the hope of one more return to China and his laying down the shepherd’s crook and robe among the flock he had gathered from among the



heathen. That hope was not to be realized. Though he had left Amoy, yet he ceased not to do what he could for the work there. Though compelled to lie on his back much of the time, making writing difficult, he sent letters to the Chinese Monthly Magazine and to not a few of the pastors, encouraging them in their labors.

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Chiefly did he devote himself to the completion of a Character Colloquial Dictionary in the Amoy language, intended to be of special service to the Chinese Christian Church. It was intended to facilitate the study of the Chinese Character, especially those Characters used in the Chinese Bible. It was also calculated to promote the study of the Romanized Colloquial Version of the Scriptures as well as other Romanized Colloquial literature.

In the midst of multiplied duties and many distractions he had wrought on it for upwards of a score of years. He was eager to make it thoroughly reliable. He spared no pains to that end. He always felt very much out of patience with any one who would give to the public an inaccurate book; and it was the desire to make his dictionary as accurate as possible that kept him from having it published some years since.

He consulted Chinese literary men. He pored over Chinese dictionaries. He brought it home with him, requiring, as he thought, still further revision, and his last labors were the completion of it with the valued assistance of the Rev. Daniel Rapalje, of the Amoy Mission. It is now going through the press and will soon be at the service of missionaries and native brethren who have eagerly awaited its appearance for many years.

His strength gradually failed and on August 19, 1892, in his seventy-third year, he quietly breathed his last at Bound Brook, New Jersey.

The mortal tent loosened down and folded was laid away in the family plot near Somerville, New Jersey. Most of his living, working years he had spent far away from the ancestral home. It was God's will that his dust should find a place next to the kindred dust of father and mother, sister and brother, in the peaceful God's acre but a few miles from the old homestead.

Dr. Talmage left a wife, two daughters and three sons, and a goodly circle of relatives and friends to mourn his departure. Mrs. Talmage has since returned to the Talmage Manse at Amoy and taken up afresh her chosen work in educating the ill-privileged and ignorant women of China. The two daughters, Miss Katharine and Miss Mary, are rendering most faithful and efficient service, too, among China's mothers and daughters. Rev. David M. Talmage fills a pastorate with the Reformed Church of Westwood, New Jersey. Mr. John Talmage is a rice merchant at New Orleans, Louisiana. Rev. George E. Talmage ministers to the Lord's people at Mott Haven, New York.

When the sun of Dr. Talmage's life set, it was to the Chinese brethren at Amoy, like the setting of a great hope. The venerable teacher had left them two years before, but he had not spoken a final farewell. They and he looked for one more meeting on earth. He



was known to the whole Chinese Church in and about Amoy for a circuit of a hundred miles. He sat at its cradle. He watched its growth until within two years of the day when it went forth two bands united in one Synod with twenty organized, self-supporting churches, nineteen native pastors, upwards of two thousand communicants and six thousand adherents.



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In the many breaks that occur in the missionary constituency, his life was the one chain of continuity. The Churches had come to feel that whoever failed them, they had Teacher Talmage still. His departure was like the falling down of a venerable cathedral, leaving the broken and bleeding ivy among the dust and debris. The Chinese Christians had leaned hard upon him. They loved and revered him as a father. Since he passed away his name has seldom been mentioned in any public assembly of the Church by any of the Chinese brethren without the broken and trembling utterance that has called forth from a listening congregation the silent, sympathetic tear.

Great and good man, fervent preacher, inspiring teacher, wise and sympathetic counselor, generous friend, affectionate father,—farewell, till the morning breaks and we meet in the City of Light. “And behold these shall come from far, and lo, these from the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.”

“Oh then what raptured greetings,  
What knitting severed friendships up,  
Where partings are no more.”

## XII. IN MEMORIAM.

### DR. TALMAGE-THE MAN.

*By Rev. W. S. Swanson, D.D.*

[Dr. Swanson was for twenty years a valued member of the English Presbyterian Mission at Amoy, and subsequently Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of England until his death, November 24, 1893]

My first meeting with Dr. Talmage took place in the early days of July, 1860, and from that day till the day of his death he was regarded as not only one of the best and most valued friends, but I looked up to him as a father beloved and respected.

One cannot help recalling now the impressions of those early days. There was a marked individuality about this man that made you regard him whether you would or not. You felt that he was a man bound to lead and to take the foremost place amongst his brethren and all with whom he came in touch. There was a firmness of tread, and the brave courage of conviction, united with a womanly tenderness, that were unmistakable.

You saw he had made up his mind before he spoke, and that when he did speak he spoke with a fullness of knowledge that few men possessed. He was every inch of him a man.



And what touched us very much, who were young men, was the tender forbearance with which he always treated us. We saw this more clearly as the years passed on, and learned how much, perhaps, he had to bear from some of us whose assertiveness in some matters was in the inverse ratio of our knowledge. The reference here is to matters and methods regarding our work as missionaries to the Chinese. He bore with us, and knew well the day would come when, with increasing knowledge, there would come increasing hesitation in pronouncing too hastily on the problems we had to face; and he knew well that day would come if there was anything in us at all.



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In my own study of the Chinese language he and another who also has gone to the “better land”—the Rev. Dr. Douglas—assisted in every possible way; and to both in this line am I indebted for what was the most important furnishing in the first instance for every missionary to China. I can well remember the plane upon which Dr. Talmage placed this study of the language.

It was our work for Christ, at this stage a far more important one than any other. He encouraged us to use whatever vocables we had got, no matter whether we were met with the wondering smile of the Chinaman in his vain endeavor to understand us, or to keep from misunderstanding us.

“Use whatever you have got, be glad when you are corrected, but use your words.” To some of us the advice was invaluable.

And in other ways the same spirit was manifest. He did all he could to get us to attend every Christian gathering, to sit and listen to the business of the Sessions, and to show the Chinese as soon as possible that we were one with them, and he succeeded. There was an enthusiasm and warmth distinguishing these early days of the Amoy church that were formative in a very high degree, and that are now a precious memory.

Then Dr. Talmage was a scholar, with a very wide range of scholarship. We looked up to him and we respected him, with an esteem few men have ever won. And in conjunction with his scholarly furnishing there was an absorbing, consuming zeal for Christ and His kingdom, and an intense love for the Chinese people. If he had not this latter, he could not have been the unmistakably influential and successful missionary he was. These, coupled with a Christian walk and devotion, formed the furnishing of this man of God.

He was also a true gentleman, a Christian gentleman in every sense of the word. The best proof of this was that we loved him, and if the foreign ladies in Amoy who knew him were asked what they thought of him—many of them have gone to rest—they would hardly get words to tell out all their respect and love for him. His visits in our houses were most welcome, and when he spent an evening with us there was always sunshine where he was. He was essentially a happy man, and nothing pleased him more than to see all happy around him.

There is still one point to which reference must here be made. Missionaries were not the only foreign residents in Amoy. There was also a considerable number of American and European merchants. Unfortunately the missionaries and the merchants did not always see eye to eye. Dr. Talmage was a favorite with every one of them. They esteemed him, they would have done anything to serve him; and at no cost of principle or testimony he won this place with them.

And to those who know the conditions of life in China, it will be at once understood what a man he must have been to win such a position.



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It may not be generally known that in Amoy we have a "Union English Church," with regular Sabbath services in English. These services were conducted by the missionaries in turn. And we fear it may also not be known what Dr Talmage's powers as a preacher were. He was a very prince among English preachers; and if he had remained in America this would very soon have been acknowledged. There were no tricks or devices of manner or words employed by him for winning the popular ear. He never seemed to forget the solemnity and responsibility of his position in the pulpit. He hesitated not "to declare the whole counsel of God." He stands before me now as I listen with bated breath to the fire of his eloquence, denouncing where denunciation was needed, contending with a burning earnestness that never failed to carry us with him, for "the faith once delivered to the saints," and then with exquisite tenderness seeking to draw his hearers to Him who is Saviour and Brother. He never failed to think and speak as much about temptation as about sin. It was a real feast to attend the English service when it was conducted by him. And during all my time in Amoy, there was always a large congregation when Dr. Talmage was the preacher.

He was not all tenderness. He would only have been a one-sided man if this were all. He was as strong as he was tender; a keen and powerful opponent in discussion. And we often had very warm and keen discussions; keener and warmer than I had ever seen before I went to Amoy, or have ever seen since. We had to discuss principles and methods of translation, hymnology, Church work, Church discipline, and many other subjects. And there was no mincing of matters at these discussions. Foremost amongst us was Dr. Talmage, tenaciously and persistently advocating the view he happened to have taken on any question. There were men of very strong individuality among us, and these gave as good as they got. I can recall these scenes, but I cannot recall a single word he said that involved a personal wound or left a barb. When it was all over he was the same loving brother, and not an atom of bitterness was left behind. By us, the brethren of the English Presbyterian Mission, he was looked up to as a revered father, just as much as he was by the brethren of his own Mission. This will be seen more fully further on, and a simple statement of the fact is all that is necessary here.

There is another and most sacred relation—his position as the head of a family,—the veil of which it seems almost sacrilege to uplift. But it must be said, and it is only a well-known fact, that few happier homes exist than his home was. He was there what he was elsewhere, the man of God.



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Dr. Talmage was not perfect. He was essentially a humble man, and he would be the first to tell us that of every sinner saved by grace, he was the most unworthy. And when he said it, he felt it. And he had not the very most distant idea how great a man he was. Sometimes one fears that this very modesty pushed to an extreme prevented others who did not know his life and his work from accurately gauging his real work. Better perhaps, he would say, that it should be so; better to think of the work than of the workers. To hold up Christ and to be hidden behind Him is the highest privilege of those engaged in the service of this King. And this, his uniform bearing, made him all the greater.

### **DR. TALMAGE-THE MISSIONARY.**

It would be useless speculation to lay down here what should be the special qualifications of a missionary to the Chinese. The better way is to find them in the concrete, so far as you can do so in an individual, and set Him forth as an example for others. The friend of whom we write would deprecate this, but it is the only way in which we can see him as he was and account for the singularly prominent place he occupied amongst us.

I do not need to say here that he was a man of faith and prayer, earnest and zealous for the spread of Christ's Kingdom; in the face of difficulties and dangers, of disappointments and failures, maintaining an unwavering faith that the Kingdom must come and would yet rule over all.

He had both an intense love for his work and enthusiasm in carrying it on. He came with a definite message to the people to whom the Master had sent him. There was no apologizing for it, no watering it down, no uncertain sound about it with him. Christ and Christ alone can meet the wants and woes of humanity,—Chinese or American or British. He had no doubt about it whatever; and hereby some of us learned that if we had not this message it would have been far better for us to have stayed at home. And this feature marked him all over his course. You felt as you listened to his pleadings that sin and salvation were terms brimful of meaning to him. He had traveled this road, and all his pleadings seemed to be summed up in the one yearning cry, "Come with us and we will do thee good." "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And he would have gone to the end, "of whom I am chief."

Then he had a great love for the people. He made himself acquainted with the family and social conditions of the people. He had not come to Americanize but to Christianize the Chinese. And for this he equipped himself. I never saw him so happy as when he was surrounded by them. He was then in his real element, answering their questions, solving their difficulties, opening up to them the Scriptures, and meeting them wherever he thought they needed to be met. And go to his study when you liked, you



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almost always found some Chinese Christians there. He was the great referee, to whom they carried home difficulties and family trials, assured that his sympathy and advice would never be denied them. This endeared him to them in an extraordinary manner. We never on such occasions found a trace of impatience with him. What would have annoyed others did not seem to annoy him, and the consequence was that the whole church loved him. There was an inexhaustible well of tenderness in the man's nature, and it was sweetened by the grace of God in his heart.

We sometimes thought he erred by excess in this particular. He was unwilling to think anything but good of them, and was thus apt to be influenced too much by designing and astute Chinamen. Often we have heard it said, "Well, if you won't listen to us, Dr. Talmage will." But, looking back to-day over it all, if it was a fault, it was one that leant to virtue's side. He was wonderfully unsuspecting: and so far as his fellow men were concerned, Chinese or Westerns, the mental process which he almost invariably employed was to try to find out what good there was in a man. And now one loves him all the more for such a Christlike spirit.

Dr. Talmage was thoroughly acquainted with the spoken language of Amoy. Few men, if any, had a more extensive knowledge of its vocables. He spoke idiomatically and beautifully as the Chinese themselves spoke, and not as he thought they should speak. There was no slipshod work with him in this particular. Here was the indispensable furnishing and he must get it. And he did get it in no average measure. This was the prime requisite, and through no other avenue could he get really and honestly to work. There is no royal road to the acquisition of the Chinese language. It is only by dint of hard, plodding, and persevering study one can acquire an adequate acquaintance with it.

And till the last he never gave up his study of it. He was not satisfied, and no true missionary ever will be satisfied with such a smattering of knowledge as may enable him to proclaim a few Christian doctrines. Such superficiality was not his aim or end. And when he first acquired Chinese, it was more difficult to do so. There were no aids in the way of dictionaries or vocabularies.

It may be his knowledge of the language was all the more accurate on this account. He got it from the fountain-head, and not through foreign sources. He was thus qualified to take a prominent place in all the varied work of a mission—in translation, in revision, and in hymnology—departments as important and as influential for attaining the end in view as any other possible department in the Mission.

As a preacher to the Chinese he was unrivaled. The people hung on his lips and never seemed to lose a word. He was in this respect a model to every one of us younger men.

The ideal of the church in China which he had set before him, the goal he desired to reach, was a native, self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating church. This is now axiomatic.

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It was not so in those early days. The men in Amoy then were men for whom we have to thank God—men ahead of their time, with generous and far-reaching ideas; not working only for their own present, but laying the foundation for a great future. Side by side with him were the brethren of the English Presbyterian Mission, with whom he had the fullest sympathy, and they had the fullest sympathy with him. It is difficult to say who were foremost in pressing the idea of an organized native church. All were equally convinced and strove together for the one great end. After many years of waiting the church grew. Congregations were formed and organized with their own elders and deacons, and in this he took the first steps. He was a born organizer. And then came the next great step, the creation of a Presbytery and the ordination in an orderly manner of native pastors. Some congregations were ready to call and support such pastors, and the men were there, for the careful training of native agents had always been a marked feature of the Amoy Mission. But how was it to be done? Common sense led to only one conclusion. This church must not be an exotic; it must be native, independent of the home churches. And there must be kept in view what was a fact already—the union between the Missions of the “Reformed Church” and of the “English Presbyterian Church.” It must be done, and done in this way, and so it was done.

The Presbytery was created with no native pastor in the first instance, but with native elders and the missionaries of both Missions. Then came a struggle that would have tried the stoutest hearts.

The “Reformed Church” in America declined to recognize this newly-created Presbytery. Dr. Talmage went home and fought the battle and won the day.

To its great honor be it said, the General Synod of the “Reformed Church” rescinded its resolution of the previous year, and allowed their honored brethren, the missionaries, to take their own way. So convinced were the missionaries of the wisdom, yea, the necessity, of the course they had taken, that they were prepared to resign rather than retrace their steps.

But that painful step was not necessary. The Synod of the English Presbyterian Church gave their missionaries a free hand. There is this, however, to be said for the General Synod of the “Reformed Church.” It was only love for their agents and deep interest in this Mission that prompted their original action. They feared that by the creation of this native and independent church court, the tie that bound them to the men and the work might be loosened; and when they saw there was no risk of that, they at once acquiesced. But it was Dr. Talmage’s irresistible pleadings that won their hearts.

The native church has grown. About twenty native pastors have been ordained, settled, and entirely supported by their own congregations. The Presbytery has grown so large that it has to be divided into two presbyteries; and these, with the Presbytery of Swatow, where brethren of the “English Presbyterian Church” are working, will form the Synod of the native Presbyterian Church in those regions of China.



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In connection with all this we must mention another name—the name of one very dear to Dr. Talmage, and of one to whom he was very dear. They were one in heart and soul about this. We refer to the Rev. Dr. Douglas, of the English Presbyterian Mission. They stood side by side during all their work in Amoy.

Dr. Talmage was by a good many years the predecessor in the field. They were both great men, men of very different temperament, and yet united. Not on this point, but on many another, they failed to see eye to eye, but they were always united in heart and aim. True and lasting union can only exist where free play is given to distinct individualities.

And so it has always been with this union, the first, I believe, between Presbyterian Churches in any mission field. And when the history of the Amoy Mission comes to be written, these two men will have a leading place in it; for to them more than to any others do we owe almost all that is distinctive there in union and in methods of work.

And when our beloved father Talmage passed from earth to heaven, what thankfulness must have filled his heart. In the night of his first years in China there were labor and toil, but there was no fruit for him. The dawn came and the first converts of his own Mission were gathered in. When he went to rest, there was a native church; there were native pastors; orderly church courts; a well equipped theological college, the common property of the two Missions; successful medical missionary work, woman's work in all its branches, and a native church covering a more extensive region than he had in the early days dreamt of. And there was another honored Mission in Amoy—that of the London Missionary Society, whose operations have been followed by abundant and singular success. To this Mission he was warmly attached; and he never, so far as we can remember, ceased to show the deepest interest in its work, and the heartiest rejoicing at its success.

And now he has gone, the last, we may say, of the men who began the work of the Presbyterian Mission of Christ in China; but ere he passed away, he knew that men of God were still there with the old enthusiasm and the old appetite for solid and substantial work.

We cannot part with him now without one fond and lingering look behind. Burns, Sandeman, Doty, Douglas, and Talmage; what a galaxy these early pioneers in Amoy were. Few churches have had such gifts from God, few fields more devoted, whole-hearted missionaries. It was a privilege to know them, to work with them, to learn at their feet, unworthy though some of us may be as their successors.

May the Lord of the Harvest rouse His own Church by their memories to greater energy and self denial in the spread of His Kingdom.



Their memories will never die in China. Those who have lately visited Amoy tell us that they who knew them among the Chinese Christians speak lovingly and fondly of those early heroes. And they will tell their children what they were and what they did, and so generation after generation will hear the story, and find how true it is that workers die, but their work never dies. "Their works do follow them."



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### VENERABLE TEACHER TALMAGE.

*Tribute of pastor Iap Han Chiong.*

[Pastor Iap was the first pastor of the Chinese Church]

Teacher Talmage was very gentle. He wished ever to be at peace with men. If he saw a man in error he used words of meekness in convincing and converting the man from his error. Whether he exhorted, encouraged or instructed, his words were words of prudence, seasoned with salt, so that men were glad to receive and obey.

Teacher Talmage was a lover of men. When he saw a man in distress and it was right for him to help, he helped. In peril, he exerted himself to deliver the man; in weakness, in danger of falling, he tried to uphold; suffering oppression, he arose to the defense, fearing no power, but contending earnestly for the right.

Teacher Talmage was very gracious in receiving men, whether men of position or the common people. He treated all alike. If they wished to discuss any matter with him and get his advice, he would patiently listen to their tale. If he had any counsel to give, he gave it. If he felt he could not conscientiously have anything to do with the affair, he told the men forthwith.

He could pierce through words, and see through men's countenances and judge what the man was, who was addressing him.

Teacher Talmage had great eloquence and possessed great intelligence. His utterance was clear, his voice powerful, his exposition of doctrine very thorough. Men listened and the truth entered their ears and their hearts understood.

Teacher Talmage was grave in manner. He commanded the respect and praise of men. His was a truly ministerial bearing. Men within and without the Church venerated him.

Sometimes differences between brethren arose. Teacher Talmage earnestly exhorted to harmony. Even serious differences, which looked beyond healing, were removed, because men felt constrained to listen to his counsel.

Teacher Talmage was exceedingly diligent. When not otherwise engaged, morning and afternoon found him in his study reading, writing, preparing sermons, translating books.

He preached every Sabbath. He conducted classes of catechumens. He founded the Girls' School at the Church "Under the Bamboos." He founded the Theological Seminary. Others taught with him, but he was the master spirit. He was ten points



careful that everything relating to the organization and administration of the Church should be in accordance with the Holy Book.

Only at the urgent request of two physicians did he finally leave China. He was prepared to die and to be buried at Amoy. And this was not because he was not honored in his ancestral country, or could find no home. No, he had sons, he had a brother, he had nephews and nieces, he had many relatives and friends who greatly revered and loved him.



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But Teacher Talmage could not bear to be separated from the Church in China. Surely this was imitating the heart of Christ. Surely this was loving the people of China to the utmost.

### **REV. JOHN VAN NEST TALMAGE, D.D.**

**BY REV. S. L. BALDWIN, D.D.,**

[Recording Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.]

My memory of Dr. Talmage dates back to the year 1846. I was then but eleven years old, but I remember distinctly the earnestness of his manner, as he preached early in that year in the Second Reformed Church of Somerville, New Jersey. His missionary zeal was of the most intense character.

I was present at the Missionary Convention, at Millstone, New Jersey, August 26, 1846, and saw him ordained. The Rev. Gabriel Ludlow preached from 2 Timothy ii. 1, and the charge to the candidate was given by the Rev. Elihu Doty, of Amoy. Mr. Doty, at a children's meeting in the afternoon, asked us whether we would come to help in the missionary work, and asked us to write down the question and think and pray about it, and when we had made up our minds to write an answer underneath the question. I did "think and pray about it," and some weeks afterward, under a sense of duty, wrote "Yes" under it. From that time on, it was not a strange thought to me, to go to China as a missionary; and when the call came in 1858, I was ready. In 1860, on my first visit to Amoy, I renewed old acquaintanceship, and during my twenty-two years in China was several times a guest in Dr. Talmage's family.

He was in the very front rank of missionaries. For ability, for fidelity, for usefulness, he had few equals. As a preacher, he was clear, forceful, fearless. As a translator, his work was marked by carefulness and accuracy. In social life, old-fashioned hospitality made every one feel at home, and one would have to travel far to find a more animated and interesting conversationalist. He held his convictions with great tenacity, and was a powerful debater, but always courteous to his opponents.

Many missionaries fell by his side, or were obliged to leave the field; and in the providence of God he remained until he was the oldest of all the American missionaries in China. His was a most pure and honorable record, and his death was universally lamented. From little beginnings, he was privileged to see one of the most flourishing of the native communions of China arise and attain large numbers and great influence among the Christian churches of the empire.

Such a history and such a record are to be coveted. May the Head of the Church raise up many worthy successors to this true and noble man!



**THE REV. J. V. N. TALMAGE, D.D..**

**BY REV. TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D., LL.D.,**

[Pastor of the Collegiate Reformed Church, New York City.]



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My acquaintance with Dr. Talmage began at a very early period. During the years 1842-5 his father was Sheriff of Somerset Co., N. J., and resided at Somerville. While there he and his wife were members in communion of the Second Reformed Dutch Church, of which I was pastor; and from them I heard frequently of their son John, who was then a student in New Brunswick.

He prosecuted his studies in the College and Theological Seminary with zeal and success, and was duly licensed, and then, while awaiting the arrival of the period when he would be sent to join the mission in China, he accepted the position of assistant to the Rev. Dr. Brodhead, who at that time was minister of the Central Church of Brooklyn. Here his services were very acceptable, and the training under such an experienced man of God was of great value to him. His course was what might have been expected of one reared in a peculiarly pious household. His father was a cheerful and exemplary Christian, and his mother was the godliest woman I ever knew. Her religion pervaded her whole being, and seemed to govern every thought, word, and deed, yet never was morbid or overstrained. The robust common sense which characterized her and her husband descended in full measure upon their son John. His consecration to the mission work was complete, and his interest in the cause was very deep, but it never manifested itself in unseemly or extravagant ways.

So far as I can recall, there was nothing particularly brilliant or original in the early sermons or addresses of the young missionary—nothing of those wondrous displays of word-painting, imagination, and dramatic power which have made his brother, Dr. T. De Witt Talmage, famous. But there was a mental grasp, a force and a fire which often induced the remark that he was too good to be sent to the heathen, there being many at that time who labored under the mistake that a missionary did not require to be a man of unusual ability, that gifts and acquirements were thrown away on a life spent among idolaters. Still, while this was the case, none of his friends expected that he would develop such marked and varied power as was seen in his entire course at Amoy. I remember the surprise with which I heard the late Dr. Swanson, of London, say from his own observation during ten years of the closest intercourse at Amoy, that Dr. Talmage was equally distinguished and efficient in every part of the missionary's work, whether in preaching the Word, or translating the Scriptures, or creating a Christian literature, or training native workers. Nothing seemed to come amiss to him; everywhere he was facile princeps. I suppose that the explanation is found in his thorough and unreserved consecration. He was given heart and soul to the work. Whatever he did was done with his whole mind. There was no vacillation or indecision, but a deliberate concentration of all his faculties upon the task set before him. Nor did he work



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by spurts or through temporary enthusiasm, but with a steady, unyielding determination. So he went on through life without haste and without rest, doing his best at all times and in every species of service, and thus earning the brilliant reputation he acquired. The same qualities rendered him as wise in counsel as he was efficient in working. He was able to look on both sides of a given problem, was not inclined to snap judgments, but preferred to discriminate, to weigh, and, if need be, to wait. Yet, when the time came, the decision was ready.

He perceived earlier than his brethren at home the true policy as to churches in heathen lands, that is, that they should not be mere continuations of the denomination whose missionaries had been the means of founding them, but should have an independent existence and grow upon the soil where they were planted, taking such form and order as Providence might suggest. When the proposal was made in accordance with these views to build up a native Chinese Church strictly autonomous, there was an immediate revulsion. The General Synod in 1863 emphatically declined to consent, not, however, from denominational bigotry, but on the ground that the new converts must have some standards of faith and order, and, if so, why not ours, which had been tested by centuries? And, moreover, if they were to be regarded as an integral part of the Church at home, that fact would prove to be a powerful incitement to prayer and liberality on the part of our people. But the rebuff did not dishearten Dr. Talmage. He renewed the appeal the next year, and had the satisfaction of seeing it succeed. Full consent was given to the aim to build up a strong, self-governing, and, as soon as might be, self-supporting body of native churches in China, who should leave behind the prejudices of the past, and form themselves under the teaching of God's Spirit and Providence in such way as would best meet the demands of the time and be most efficient in advancing the Kingdom of God upon the earth. The consequences have been most happy. The missionaries of the Presbyterian Church have cordially co-operated in renouncing all denominational interests and giving all diligence to the forming of what might be called a Chinese Christian Church, freed from any external bond and at liberty to shape its own character and course under the guidance of the Divine Spirit. The experiment has been entirely successful, and stands conspicuous as a testimony to the true policy of carrying on missionary work in countries where there is already an antique civilization and certain social habits which need to be taken account of.

Dr. Talmage always kept himself in touch with the Church at home by correspondence or by personal intercourse. His visits to America were in every case utilized to the fullest extent, save when hindered by impaired health.



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It is matter of joyful congratulation that he was permitted to finish the usual term of man's years in the missionary field. Others of our eminent men, such as Abeel, Thompson, Doty, and Pohlman, were cut off in the midst of their days. But he spent a full lifetime, dying not by violence or accident, but only when the bodily frame had been worn out in the natural course of events. Our Church has been signally favored of God in the gifts and character and work of the men she has sent into the foreign field—and this not merely in the partial judgment of their denominational brethren, but in the deliberate opinion of such competent and experienced observers as the late Dr. Anderson, of the American Board, and the late S. Wells Williams, the famous Chinese scholar; [One remark of Dr. S. Wells Williams is worth reproducing: "I think, myself, after more than forty years' personal acquaintance with hundreds of missionaries in China, that David Abeel was facile princeps among them all."—Presb. Review, *ii.* 49.] but I think that none of them, neither Abeel nor Thompson, surpassed Dr. Talmage in any of the qualities, natural or acquired, which go to make an accomplished missionary of the cross. I enjoyed the personal acquaintance of them all, having been familiar with the progress of the work from the time when (October, 1832) our Board of Foreign Missions was established, and therefore am able to form an intelligent opinion. Our departed brother can no more raise his voice, either at home or abroad, but his work remains, and his memory will never die. For long years to come his name will be fragrant in the hearts of our people; and his lifelong consecration to the enterprise of the world's conversion will prove an example and a stimulus to this and the coming generation. The equipoise of his mind, the solidity of his character, the strength of his faith, the brightness of his hope, the simple, steadfast fidelity of his devotion to the Master, will speak trumpet-tongued to multitudes who never saw his face in the flesh. The unadorned story of his life, what he was and what he did by the grace of God, will cheer the hearts of all the friends of foreign missions, and win others to a just esteem of the cause which could attract such a man to its service and animate him to such a conspicuous and blessed career.

### **REV. JOHN VAN NEST TALMAGE, D.D.**

*By Rev. John M. Ferris, D.D.,*

[Editor of the "Christian Intelligencer" and ex-Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the American Reformed Church.]



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Circumstances which tested character, ability, and attainments brought me into intimate relations with Rev. Dr. John V. N. Talmage. The impressions I received are these: He was eminently of a sunny disposition. A smile was on his face and laughter in his eyes almost all day long. He was conspicuously cheerful and hopeful. The strength of his character was unusual and would bear victoriously very severe tests. Mental and moral ability of a very high order marked his participation in public exercises and his demeanor in social life. It seemed to me that in mind and heart there were in him the elements of greatness. Greatness he never sought, but avoided. Still, from the time succeeding the opening years of his ministry, he was a leader among men until seized with the long illness which terminated his useful life. Those who knew him appointed him one of their chief counselors and guides, and in any assembly where he was comparatively unknown he was accepted as a leading mind as soon as he had taken part in its discussions. A wide range of knowledge was his. It was surprising how he had maintained an acquaintance with the research and discovery of his day while secluded in China from the life of the Western nations. With all this his intercourse with men was marked by modesty and the absence of ostentatious display. The deference with which he treated the opinions of others and of his manner in presenting his knowledge and convictions to an audience was extraordinary. He was courteously inquisitive, seeking from others what they knew and thought, and this oftentimes, perhaps habitually, with men much his inferiors. Such a man would be expected to be tolerant of the opinions of others, and this he was eminently, although his own convictions were clear, strongly held, earnestly presented and advocated. How often we heard him say, "So I think," or "So it seems to me, but I may be wrong."

Accuracy in statement was sought for by him constantly, sometimes to the detriment of his public addresses. When we who were familiar with him were humorous at his expense, it was almost invariably in relation to this constant endeavor to be accurate, which led now and then to qualifications of his words that were decidedly amusing. He was animated, earnest, and strong in public addresses. His mind was active; apt to take an independent, original view, and vigorous. His sermons were often very impressive and powerful. Few who heard in whole or in part his discourse on the words, "The world by wisdom knew not God"—an extemporaneous sermon—will forget the terse, vigorous sentences which came from his lips. It was, I believe, the last sermon he prepared in outline to be delivered to our churches in this country. It was full of power and life.

Dr. Talmage was a Christian and a Christian gentleman everywhere and always. It seemed as natural to him to be a Christian as to breathe. Conscientious piety marked his daily life.



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He was a delightful companion through his gentleness, sympathy, wide range of knowledge, cheerfulness, animated and earnest speech, vigor of thought and expression, deference for the opinions and rights of others, and unselfishness. He asked nothing, demanded nothing for himself, but was alert to contribute to the enjoyment of those around him. The work of his life was of inestimable value. He was abundant in labors. Only the life to come will reveal how much he accomplished which in the highest sense was worthy of accomplishment. Those who knew him best, esteemed, loved, and trusted him the most.

### APPENDIX.

Ecclesiastical Relations of Presbyterian Missionaries, especially of the Presbyterian Missionaries at Amoy, China.

*By Rev. J. V. N. Talmage, D.D.*

We have recently received letters making inquiries concerning the Relations of the Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church, and of the American Reformed Church to the Tai-hoey [Presbytery, or Classis,] of Amoy; stating views on certain points connected with the general subject of the organization of ecclesiastical Judicatories on Mission ground; and asking our views on the same. We have thought it best to state our answer so as to cover the whole subject of these several suggestions and inquiries, as (though they are from different sources) they form but one subject.

Our views are not hasty. They are the result of much thought, experience and observation. But we are now compelled to throw them together in much more haste than we could wish, for which, we trust, allowance will be made.

As preliminary we remark that we have actual and practical relations both to the home churches, and to the churches gathered here, and our Ecclesiastical relations should correspond thereto.

1. Our Relation to the Home Churches. We are their agents, sent by them to do a certain work, and supported by them in the doing of that work. Therefore so long as this relation continues, in all matters affecting our qualifications for that work,—of course including “matters affecting ministerial character,”—we should remain subject to their jurisdiction. In accordance with this we retain our connection with our respective home Presbyteries or Classes.
2. Our Relation to the Church here. We are the actual pastors of the churches growing up under our care, until they are far enough advanced to have native pastors set over them. The first native pastors here were ordained by the missionaries to the office of “Minister of the Word,” the same office that we ourselves hold. In all subsequent

ordinations, and other ecclesiastical matters, the native pastors have been associated with the missionaries. The Tai-hoey at Amoy, in this manner, gradually grew up with perfect parity between the native and foreign members.

With these preliminary statements we proceed to notice the suggestions made and questions propounded. "To extend to the native churches on mission ground the lines of separation which exist among Presbyterian bodies" in home lands is acknowledged to be a great evil. To avoid this evil and to "bring all the native Presbyterians," in the same locality, "into one organization," two plans are suggested to us.



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The first plan suggested (perhaps we should say mentioned for it is not advocated), we take to be that the missionaries become not only members of the ecclesiastical judicatories formed on mission ground, but also amenable to those judicatories in the same way, and in every respect, as their native members, their ecclesiastical relation to their home churches being entirely severed. This plan ignores the actual relation of missionaries to their home churches, as spoken of above. Surely the home churches cannot afford this.

Perhaps we should notice another plan sometimes acted on, but not mentioned in the letters we have now received. It is that the missionaries become members of the Mission Church Judicatories as above; but that these Judicatories be organized as parts of the home churches, so that the missionaries will still be under the jurisdiction of the home churches through the subjection of the Mission Judicatories to the higher at home. This plan can only work during the infancy of the mission churches, while the Mission Church Judicatories are still essentially foreign in their constituents. Soon the jurisdiction will be very imperfect. This imperfection will increase as fast as the mission churches increase. Moreover this plan will extend to the native churches the evil deprecated above.

The second plan suggested we take to be that the missionaries, while they remain the agents of the home churches, should retain their relation respectively to their home churches, and have only an advisory relation to the Presbytery on mission ground. This is greatly to be preferred to the first plan suggested. It corresponds to the relation of missionaries to their respective home churches. It takes into consideration also, but does not fully correspond to the relation of the missionaries to the churches on mission ground, at least does not fully correspond to the relation of the missionaries to the native churches at Amoy. Our actual relation to these churches seems to us to demand that as yet we take part with the native pastors in their government.

The peculiar relationship of the missionaries to Tai-hoey, *viz.*, having full membership, without being subject to discipline by that body,—is temporary, arising from the circumstances of this infant church, and rests on the will of Tai-hoey. This relationship has never been discussed, or even suggested for discussion in that body, so that our view of what is, or would be, the opinion of Tai-hoey on the subject we gather from the whole character of the working of that body from its first formation, and from the whole spirit manifested by the native members. Never till last year has there been a case of discipline even of a native member of Tai-hoey. We do not know that the thought that occasion may also arise for the discipline of missionaries, has ever suggested itself to any of the native members. If it has, we have no doubt they have taken for granted that the discipline of missionaries belongs to the churches which have sent them here. But we also have no doubt that Tai-hoey would exercise the right of refusing membership to any missionary if necessary.



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It is suggested as an objection to the plan that has been adopted by the missionaries at Amoy, that “where two Presbyteries have jurisdiction over one man, it may not be always easy to define the line where the jurisdiction of the one ends and the other begins; and for the foreign Presbyterian to have a control over the native Presbyterian which the native cannot reciprocate, would be anomalous, and contrary to that view of the parity of Presbyters which the Scriptures present.”

From our last paragraph above it will be seen that the “line” of demarcation alluded to in the first half of the above objection has certainly never yet been defined by Tai-hoey, but it will be seen likewise that we have no apprehension of any practical difficulty in the matter. The last half of the objection looks more serious, for if our plan really involves a violation of the doctrine of the parity of the ministry, this is a very serious objection—fatal, indeed, unless perhaps the temporary character of the arrangement might give some sufferance to it in a developing church. It does not, however in our opinion, involve any such doctrine. It does not touch that doctrine at all.

The reason why Tai-hoey does not claim the right of discipline over the missionaries is not because these are of a higher order than the other members, but because the missionaries have a most important relation to the home churches which the other members have not. The Tai-hoey respects the rights of those churches which have sent and are still sending the Gospel here, and has fullest confidence that they will exercise proper discipline over their missionaries. Whether they do this or not, the power of the Tai-hoey to cut off from its membership, or refuse to admit thereto, any missionary who might prove himself unworthy, gives ample security to that body and secures likewise the benefits of discipline. If time allowed us to give a full description of our Church work here it would be seen that the doctrine of the parity of all who hold the ministerial office so thoroughly permeates the whole, that it would seem impossible for mistake to arise on that point.

In connection with this subject it is also remarked “that where two races are combined in a Presbytery, there is a tendency to divide on questions according to the line of race.”

With gratitude to God we are able to bear testimony that at Amoy we have not as yet seen the first sign of such tendency. We have heard of such tendency in some other mission fields. Possibly it may yet be manifested here. This, however, does not now seem probable. The native members of Tai-hoey, almost from the first, have outnumbered the foreign. The disproportion now is as three or four to one, and must continue to increase. It would seem, therefore, that there will now be no occasion for jealousy of the missionaries’ influence to grow up on the part of the native members.



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But, it may be asked, if the native members so far outnumber the foreign, of what avail is it that missionaries be more than advisory members? We answer: If we are in Tai-hoey as a foreign party, in opposition to the native members, even advisory membership will be of no avail. But if we are there in our true character, as we always have been, *viz.*, as Presbyters and acting pastors of churches, part and parcel of the church Judicatories, on perfect equality and in full sympathy with the native Presbyters, our membership may be of much benefit to Tai-hoey. It must be of benefit if our theory of Church Government be correct.

Of the benefit of such membership we give one illustration, equally applicable also to other forms of government. It will be remembered that assemblies conducted on parliamentary principles were unknown in China. By our full and equal membership of Tai-hoey, being associated with the native members in the various offices, and in all kinds of committees, the native members have been more efficiently instructed in the manner of conducting business in such assemblies, than they could have been if we had only given them advice. At the first, almost the whole business was necessarily managed by the missionaries. Not so now. The missionaries still take an active part even in the routine of business, not so much to guard against error or mistake, as for the purpose of saving time and inculcating the importance of regularity and promptitude. Even the earnestness with which the missionaries differ from each other, so contrary to the duplicity supposed necessary by the rules of Chinese politeness, has not been without great benefit to the native members. Instead of there being any jealousy of the position occupied by the missionaries on the part of the native members, the missionaries withdraw themselves from prominent positions, and throw the responsibility on the native members, as fast as duty to Tai-hoey seems to allow, faster than the native members wish.

We now proceed to give answers to the definite questions propounded to us, though answers to some of them have been implied in the preceding remarks. We combine the questions from different sources, and slightly change the wording of them to suit the form of this paper, and for convenience we number them.

1. "Are the missionaries members of Tai-hoey in full and on a perfect equality with the native members?"

Answer. Yes; with the exception (if it be an exception) implied in the answer to the next question.

2. "Are missionaries subject to discipline by the Tai-hoey?"

Answer. No; except that their relation to Tai-hoey may be severed by that body.

3. "Is it not likely that the sooner the native churches become self-governing, the sooner they will be self-supporting and self-propagating?"



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Answer. Yes. It would be a great misfortune for the native churches to be governed by the missionaries, or by the home churches. We think also it would be a great misfortune for the missionary to refuse all connection with the government of the mission churches while they are in whole or in part dependent on him for instruction, administration of the ordinances, and pastoral oversight. Self-support, self-government, and self-propagation are intimately related, acting and reacting on each other, and the native Church should be framed in them from the beginning of its existence.

4. "Is it the opinion of missionaries at Amoy that the native Presbyters are competent to manage the affairs of Presbytery, and could they safely be left to do so?"

Answer. Yes; the native Presbyters seem to us to be fully competent to manage the affairs of Presbytery, and we suppose it would be safe to leave them to do this entirely by themselves, if the providence of God should so direct. We think it much better, however, unless the providence of God direct otherwise, that the missionaries continue their present relation to the Tai-hoey until the native Church is farther developed.

5. "Is it likely that there can be but one Presbyterian Church in China? or are differences of dialect, *etc.*, such as to make different organizations necessary and inevitable?"

Answer. All Presbyterians in China, as far as circumstances will allow, should unite in one Church organization. By all means avoid a plurality of Presbyterian denominations in the same locality. But differences of dialect and distance of separation seem at present to forbid the formation of one Presbyterian organization for the whole of China. Even though in process of time these difficulties be greatly overcome, it would seem that the vast number of the people will continue to render such formation impracticable, except on some such principle as that on which is formed the Pan-Presbyterian Council. One Presbyterian Church for China would be very