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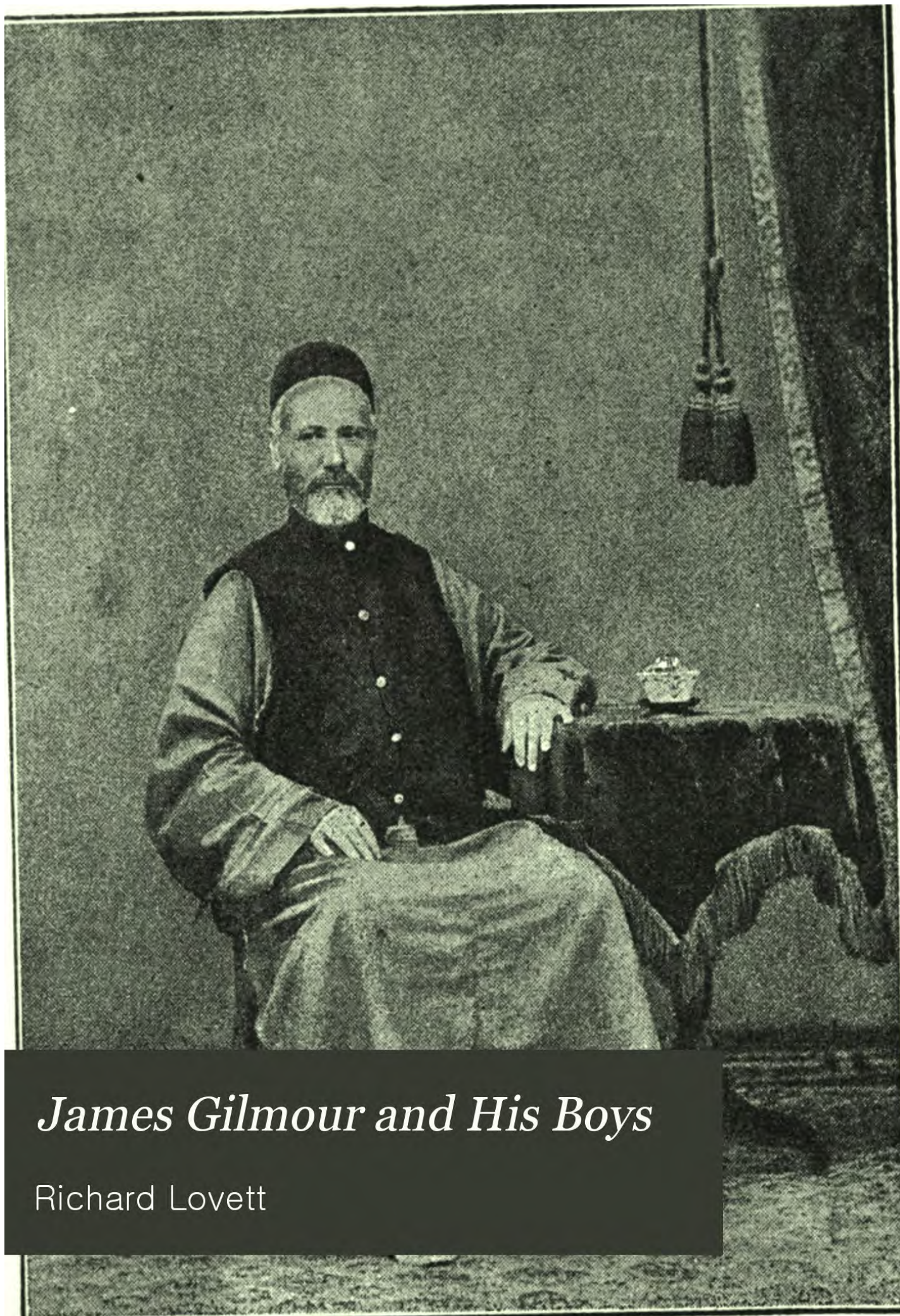
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JAMES GILMOUR
AND HIS BOYS



James Gilmour and His Boys

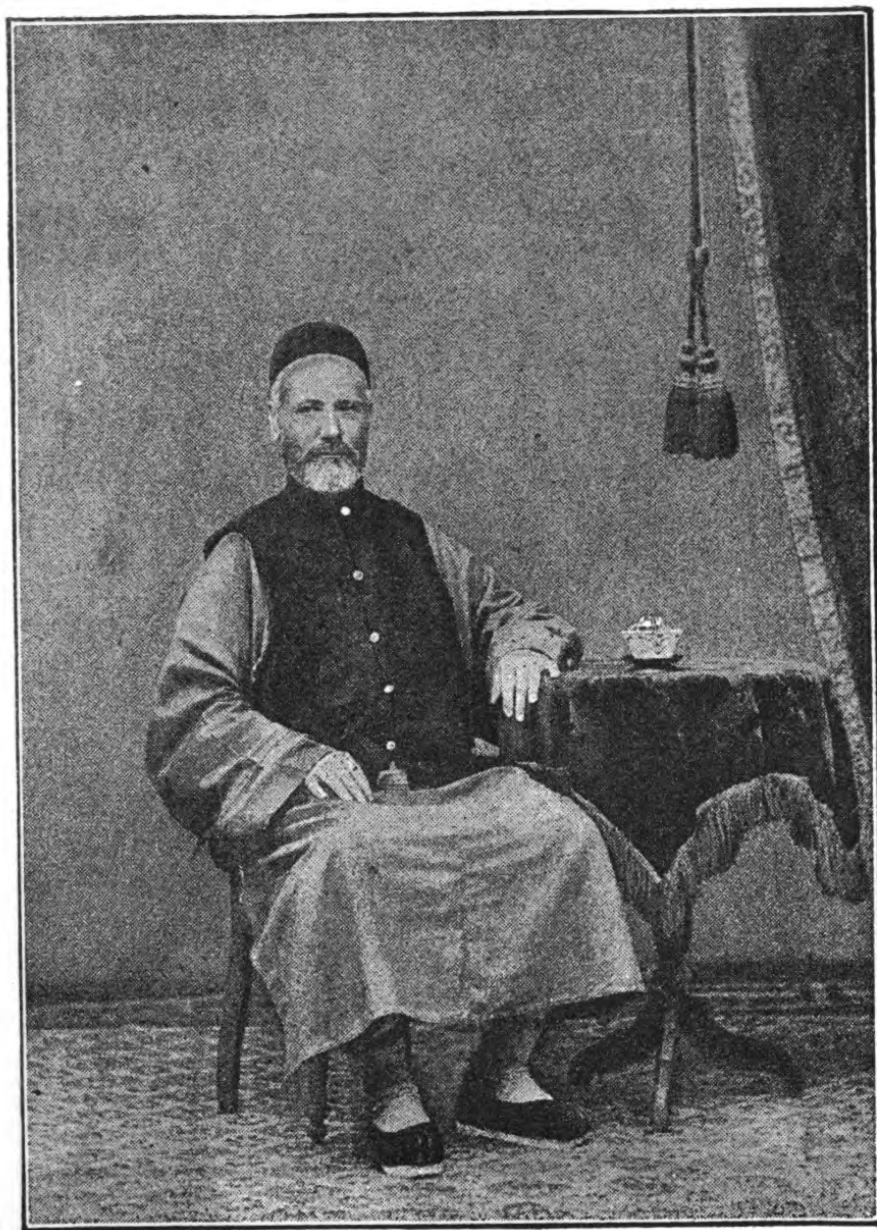
Richard Lovett



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JAMES GILMOUR AND HIS BOYS

BY

RICHARD LOVETT, M.A.

AUTHOR OF

'JAMES GILMOUR OF MONGOLIA,' 'T. RHYS EVANS OF BRIGHTON,' ETC.

WITH A MAP AND MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

56, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD

1894





A CHINESE HOUSE, WITH 'THE GUARDIANS OF THE DOOR' AT THE ENTRANCE.

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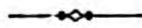
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JAMES GILMOUR AND HIS BOYS



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THIS book is partly a biography, partly a series of adventures, partly a story of work done for Jesus Christ and of very hard trials bravely endured for Him and from love to sinful men ; and partly an account of the habits and ways of life and of thought of the wonderful people who live in the vast Chinese Empire.

It is written, too, for the most part, not by him who pens this Introduction, but by a great missionary whose name is well known to every reader—James Gilmour, the Apostle of Mongolia. In 1885 his wife, like himself an heroic and devoted missionary, died,

and early in 1886 he had to endure another severe trial: he had to send away to England his two little boys, whom he dearly loved, to be educated. This is a trial that very many of our noble missionaries and their wives have to endure for the sake of Jesus and His work. And sometimes when, after six or eight years, they come back and see the boys and girls, who were quite little when they left the heathen lands, grown up to be big boys and girls, they find that they have to begin again to get to know their own children.

Mr. Gilmour had two boys—James, who in 1886 was nine years old; and Willie, who was seven. He did not wish them to forget him, and also, as they had no mother to write to them long, loving letters, he did this himself. From the time of that, to him, sad parting in 1886, with the exception of the few months during 1889 when he was in England, he wrote regularly to them, even when he was away off in Mongolia. In these letters he described the people and his adventures among them, and the different

ways in which he tried to bless them, and they are full of accounts of things which he thought would please his lads.

Now, in these letters there are many pages far too sacred to be read by any except those to whom the letters were written. But it was felt that out of the other parts of this long series of letters a very helpful and a very beautiful book for boys and girls might be made. And so the greater part of this book was really written by Mr. Gilmour himself. The letters, most of them, are written on coarse Chinese paper with lead pencil. He wrote them sometimes at noisy Chinese inns at night, when the hard work of the day was done, by the light of a feeble Chinese candle ; sometimes while on his journeys ; sometimes while resting by the way. They thus tell from day to day the wonderful story of his work during the closing years of his life.

Reading these letters carefully, and thinking and praying over them, they cannot fail to make you better boys and girls. They will help you, I feel sure, to

love Jesus more, and for His sake to love other people more, and especially the heathen, and to try to do them good ; and if, amid the joy and the perfect service of heaven, it is given to Mr. Gilmour to know anything of what now goes on in the earth, nothing, I believe, could please him more than to know that the letters he wrote to his own dear boys were helping very many other boys and girls to love Jesus better, and to work and pray harder that all heathen boys and girls may get to know and to love Jesus also.

RICHARD LOVETT.

CHAPTER II

THE BOYHOOD AND YOUTH OF JAMES GILMOUR

JAMES GILMOUR was born at Cathkin, about five miles from Glasgow, July 12, 1843. He was the third in a family of six sons, and all of his brothers, except one, grew up to be men. He was blessed with good and loving parents, and he was brought up in the careful and godly way in which so many Scotch children are trained. Robert Moffat and David Livingstone were both trained in many respects like James Gilmour. He has himself written an account of his boyhood, and one of his brothers has also told us more about him and his boyish ways. And you will see from these accounts that James loved fun and play, and sometimes a little mischief, just as other boys do. But he also got to love hard work, and did much hard work both at school and at college.

His grandfather's name was Matthew Gilmour, and he carried on the trade of a mason and also that of a wright, or, as we call it in England, a builder and

timber merchant. As time went on, he made his business as a wright the most important, and gradually gave up that of the mason.

His grandmother, Elizabeth Pettigrew by name, was a wise, capable woman, very skilful with her needle, and with so much medical knowledge that her neighbours often asked her to nurse them. She too had been well trained in a godly Scotch home. Her father was a farmer and a miller. On one occasion, when he had sent home to his minister some bags of oatmeal, Mr. Pettigrew heard that the minister thought he had received scant measure, and being a little vexed to hear this, since he was always strictly upright in all his dealings, he at once went to the manse with his measures. The oatmeal was carefully measured, and found to be above instead of under the full amount. So the sturdy miller put all that was over into a bag, slung this over his shoulder, and carried it off, in order to induce his minister to be quite sure that he had good ground to do so before he suspected any one of dishonesty.

When Mr. Gilmour sailed for China the first time, in the year 1870, he began to write a diary. In the next year, 1871, when he was by himself thousands of miles away from his old home and the dear ones he had left behind, he wrote in the diary that he did not keep it for his own sake. But he might fall ill and die, or he might even be killed,

and then, perhaps, some one, he thought, might possibly find the note-book and send it home to his friends. He did not die of illness, nor was he killed in Mongolia. But year by year his diary grew until at last it filled nineteen fairly large note-books. In the first of these books, during the voyage out to China, he wrote a very short sketch of his life up to the year 1870. In learning about the life of any one in whom we are greatly interested, it is always very helpful to read anything they themselves have written about what they did, and how they thought upon the affairs of life. So now we will read a page or two from James Gilmour's diary.

'The earliest that I can remember of my life is the portion that was spent in Glasgow, before I came with my parents out to the country. Of this time I have only a *vague* recollection. Then followed a number of years not very eventful beyond the general lot of the years of childhood. One circumstance of these years often comes up to my mind. One Sabbath all were at church except the servant, Aggie Leitch, and myself. She took down an old copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, with rude plates, and by the help of the pictures was explaining the whole book to me. I had not heard any of it before, and was deeply interested. We had just got as far as the terrible doings of Giant Despair and the horrors of Doubting Castle, when all at once, without warning, there came

a terrible knock at our front door. I really thought the giant was upon us. It was some wayfaring man asking the way or something, but the terror I felt has made an indelible impression on me.

‘When of the approved age I went to school, wondering whether I should ever be able to learn and do as others did. I was very nervous and much afraid, and wrought so hard and was so ably superintended by my mother that I made rapid progress, and was put from one class to another with delightful rapidity. I was dreadfully jealous of any one who was a good scholar like myself, and to have any one above me in class annoyed me to such a degree that I could not play cheerfully with him.’

Next to getting a man’s own words about his life, it is good to learn what those who grew up with him—his brothers, his playmates, and his school and college friends—thought about him. And so one of James Gilmour’s elder brothers has written some recollections that will help you to understand the life of a godly Scotch family, and that there was a good deal of human nature in James.

‘Grandfather and grandmother were people of strict integrity and Christian living, and walked regularly every Sunday the five miles to the Congregational Church in Glasgow, though there were several places of worship within two miles of their residence. I have often heard the old residents of

the steep and rough country road they used to take for a short cut when nearing home tell how impressed they have been by the sight of the worthy couple and their family wending their way along in the dark winter Sabbath evenings by the light of a hand-lantern. Father and mother continued the connection with the same body of worshippers in Glasgow as long as they resided in Cathkin, being members of Dr. Wardlaw's Church.

'The distance of our home from the place of worship did not admit of our attending as children any other than the regular Sabbath services ; but we were not neglected in this respect at home, so far as it lay in our parents' ability to help us. We regularly gathered around our mother's knee, reading, and having read to us, impressive little stories of boys' and girls' obedience and disobedience to their parents, truthfulness and untruthfulness to their superiors and companions ; how boys were led into temptation by evil companions, and so on—to be found in such illustrated booklets as the *Teachers' Offering*, the *Child's Companion*, the *Children's Missionary Record* (Church of Scotland), the *Tract Magazine*, and Watts' *Divine Songs for Children*. These readings were always accompanied with touching serious comments on them by mother, which tended very considerably to impress the morals contained in them on our little hearts. I remember how she used to add, "Wouldn't

it be fine if some of you, when you grow up, should be able to write such nice little stories as these for children, and do some good in the world in that way!" I have always had an idea that James's love of contributing short articles from China and Mongolia to the children's missionary magazines at home was due to these early lessons learned at his mother's knee.¹ Father, too, on Sabbath evenings, generally placed the "big" Bible (Scott and Henry's) on the table, and read aloud the comments therein upon some portion of Scripture.

'Family worship, morning and evening, was also a most regular and sacred observance in our house, and consisted of, first, asking a blessing; second, singing twelve lines of a psalm or paraphrase, or a hymn from Wardlaw's hymn-book; third, reading a chapter from the Old Testament in the mornings, and from the New in the evenings; and fourth, prayer. The chapters read were taken day by day in succession, and at the evening worship we read two verses each all round. This proved rather a trying ordeal for some of the apprentices, one or more of whom we usually had boarding with us, or to a new servant-girl, as their education in many cases had not been of too liberal a description. But they soon got used to it, and if it led them to nothing

¹ Some of the articles of this kind which he wrote are given in Chapter VII.

higher, it helped them to read better. These devotional exercises were not common in the district in the mornings, and were apt to be broken in upon by callers at the wright's shop; but that was never entertained as an excuse for curtailing them. I suppose people in the district got to know of the custom, and so did not call at a time when they knew they would have to wait. Our parents, however, never allowed this practice to obtrude on their neighbours; all was done quietly and humbly, as a matter of everyday course.

'While James was quite a child the family removed to Glasgow. During their stay in Glasgow mother's health proved very unsatisfactory, and both she and father having been brought to death's door by a malignant fever, it was decided to go back to their former place in the country. James was five years old at that time. When he was between seven and eight he was sent with his older brothers to a school in Bushyhill, Cambuslang, a distance of two miles. Here he remained till he was about twelve, when he and I were sent to Gorbals Youths' School in Green-side Street, Glasgow. We had thus five miles to go morning and evening, but we had season-tickets for the railway part of the distance, viz. between Rutherglen and Glasgow. Thomas Neil was master of this school. We were in the private room, rather a privileged place compared with the rest of the school,

seeing we received the personal attentions of Mr. Neil and were almost free from corporal punishment, which was not by any means the case in the public rooms of the school—Mr. Neil being, I was going to say, a terror to evil-doers, but he was in fact a terror to all kinds of doers, from the excitability of his temper and general sternness.

‘Here James usually kept the first or second place in the class, which was a large one; and if he happened to be turned to the bottom (an event which occurred pretty often to all the members of the class with Mr. Neil) he would determinedly endeavour to stifle a tearful little “cry,” thus demonstrating the state of his feelings at being so abased. But he never remained long at the bottom; like a cork sunk in water, he would rise at the first opportunity to his natural level at the top of the class. It was because of his diligence and success in his classes while at this school, I suppose, more than from any definite idea of what career he might follow in the future, that after leaving he was allowed to study first at the Glasgow High School and then at the University, where he gained many prizes, and fully justified his parents’ decision of allowing him to go on with his studies instead of taking him away to a trade.

‘James was not a serious, melancholy student; he was, indeed, the very opposite of that when his little intervals of recreation occurred. During the day he

would be out about the workshop and saw-mill, giving each in turn a poking and joking at times very tormenting to the recipients. If we had any little infirmity or weakness, he was sure to enlarge upon it and make us try to amend it, assuming the *rôle* and aspect of a drill-sergeant for the time being. He used to have the mid-finger of the right hand extended in such a way that he could nip and slap you with it very painfully. He used this finger constantly to pound and drill his comrades, all being done of course in the height of glee, frolic, and good-humour. This finger, no doubt, by the unlawful use to which he put it, at one time developed a painful tumour, to the delight of those who were in the habit of receiving punishment from it. James pulled a long face and acknowledged that it was a punishment sent him for using the finger in so mischievous a manner.'

From this point we may again take up the story in Mr. Gilmour's own words.

'The date of my going to college was, I think, the November of the year 1862, so that my first session at Glasgow University was 1862-63. The classes I took were junior Latin and junior Greek. In Latin I got about the twelfth prize, and in Greek I think the third. The summer I spent partly in study, partly in helping my father in his trade of a wright and joiner.

‘During 1863 and 1864 I lived in Glasgow, and worked very hard, taking the first prize in middle Greek and a prize in senior Latin, as well as a prize for private work in Greek and another for the same kind of work in Latin. This last I was specially proud of, as in it I beat the two best fellows in the Latin class. Next session (1864-65) I took a prize in senior Greek. In English literature I made no appearance in the pieces noted by the students, but came out second in the competitive examination, which of course astonished a good deal some of the noisy men who had answered so much in the class and yet knew so little. I was really proud of this prize, as I was sure it was honestly won, and as I also felt that from my position in class I failed to get credit for anything like what I knew. This session I went in for the classical and philosophy parts of the degree, and got them. I enjoyed a happy week after it was known that I had passed.’

From these words you can see how steadily and how successfully James Gilmour worked both at school and at college. He found it very hard at times to study, when he would have liked dearly to be playing. But when he came to look back upon those days of school and college life, after some years had passed away, he saw only the successes, he forgot all that had been unpleasant. He was a hard worker. Very little good is done in the world by

any but the hard workers. In a thousand different ways it is true that—

‘Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.’

In some of the letters written to his own boys while they were at school, given later on in this book, you will see how earnestly he implores them to work hard and well in their early years.

‘The next thing I had to look forward to was going to the Theological Hall of the Congregational Church of Scotland, which met in Edinburgh in the beginning of May. The session at Edinburgh I enjoyed very much. I had not too much work, and used at odd times to take long walks and go long excursions. I was often on the heights, and about Leith and Portobello, and just about the close of the session opened negotiations with the London Missionary Society, the consequence of which was that I was removed to Cheshunt College in September of that same year. Here (1867–68) a new experience awaited me—resident college life. At Glasgow we dined out, presented ourselves at classes only, and did with ourselves whatever we liked in the interval. At Cheshunt it was different. All the students live in the buildings of the college, which can accommodate forty. The lectures, as a rule, were all in the forenoon.

‘The summer vacation I spent in studying for the

Soper scholarship, value twenty pounds, which was to be bestowed after examination. I commenced the 1868 and 1869 session at Cheshunt very busily, and in addition to the class work and the Soper work, read some books which gave almost a new turn to my mind and my ideas of pastoral or missionary life. These books were James's *Earnest Ministry*, Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*, and some of Bunyan's works, which, through God's blessing, affected me very much for good. The Soper examination should have come off before Christmas, but it did not, so that I remained over Christmas at Cheshunt, grinding away as hard as I could. I was longing eagerly for the time when the examination would be over, that I might the more earnestly devote myself to the work of preaching and evangelizing. Well, the examination came and passed off satisfactorily, and I got the twenty pounds.

'Now was the decisive point. Now had I come to another period, when there was an opportunity of going on a new tack; but I found myself tempted to seek after another honour, the first prize in Cheshunt College. In my first session I had got the second only, and now I had an opportunity of trying for the first. It was a temptation indeed, but God triumphed. I looked back on my life, and saw how often I had been tempted on from one thing to another after I had resolved that I would leave my

time more free and at my disposal for God, but always was I tempted on. So now I made a stand, threw ambition to the winds, and set to reading my Bible in good earnest. I made it my chief study during the last three months of my residence at Cheshunt, and I look back upon that period of my stay there as the most profitable I had.'

In the words just quoted Mr. Gilmour shows us how he resisted a temptation which very often comes to boys and to young men who do well at school and at college. The temptation is to get to love learning for the sake of the rewards which it brings. Many of Mr. Gilmour's Glasgow friends were amazed when he told them he meant to become a missionary. They thought he ought to become a scholar, or the minister of a large and rich Church at home. But he put all such dreams aside. He had given himself to Jesus, and he wanted to do the work Jesus thought best, and to spend his life where Jesus would have him go.

He was in no sense a gloomy or a sad man. He never pulled a long face, except in fun, and he could laugh and joke in such a way that some people used to fear that he could hardly be a religious man—he was so very unlike what they thought religious people ought to be. I met him first at Cheshunt College, and I remember still his merry laugh, his cheery face, his ringing voice, and his practical jokes. He was the best speaker, the best student, and the best

preacher of his year. Almost any position might have been open to him had he chosen to stay at home. But he had heard the words of Jesus, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' And at length he came to feel that Jesus wanted him to go to one of the hardest fields in the world—to the great plains of Mongolia, to tell the scattered tribes who wander over those vast regions about the Saviour who died for them, who loves them, and who wishes to save them.

James Gilmour was ordained as a missionary to Mongolia in Augustine Chapel, Edinburgh, on February 10, 1870, and he then gave the following history of how he came to be first a Christian and then a missionary :—

'My conversion took place after I had begun to attend the Arts course in the University of Glasgow. I had gone to college with no definite aim as to preparing for a profession ; an opportunity was offered me of attending classes, and I embraced it gladly, confident that whatever training or knowledge I might there acquire would prove serviceable to me afterwards in some way or other.

'After I became satisfied that I had found the way of life, I decided to tell others of that way, and felt that I lay under responsibility to do what I could to extend Christ's kingdom. Among other plans of usefulness that suggested themselves to me was that

of entering the ministry. But, in my opinion, there were two things that every one who sought the office of the ministry should have, viz. an experimental knowledge of the truth which it is the work of the minister to preach, and a good education to help him to do it; the former I believed I had, the latter I hoped to obtain. So I quietly pursued the college course till I entered on the last session, when, after prayerful consideration and mature deliberation, I thought it my duty to offer myself as a candidate for the ministry. I made application to be admitted to the Theological Hall of the Congregational Churches of Scotland, and was received in due course.

‘Having decided as to the capacity in which I should labour in Christ’s kingdom, the next thing which occupied my serious attention was the *locality* where I should labour. Occasionally before I had thought of the relative claims of the home and foreign fields, but during the summer session in Edinburgh, I thought the matter out, and decided for the mission field; even on the low ground of common sense I seemed to be called to be a missionary. Is the kingdom a harvest-field? Then I thought it reasonable that I should seek to work where the work was most abundant and the workers fewest. Labourers say they are over-taxed at home; what, then, must be the case abroad, where there are wide-stretching plains already white to harvest, with

scarcely here and there a solitary reaper? To me the soul of an Indian seemed as precious as the soul of an Englishman, and the gospel as much for the Chinese as for the European; and as the band of missionaries was few compared with the company of home ministers, it seemed to me clearly to be my duty to go abroad.

‘But I go out as a missionary not that I may follow the dictates of common sense, but that I may obey that command of Christ, “Go into all the world and preach.” He who said “preach,” said also “Go ye into . . . and preach,” and what Christ hath joined together let not man put asunder.

‘This command seems to me to be strictly a missionary injunction, and, as far as I can see, those to whom it was first delivered regarded it in that light, so that apart altogether from choice and other lower reasons, my going forth is a matter of obedience to a plain command; and in place of seeking to assign a reason for going abroad, I would prefer to say that I have failed to discover any reason why I should stay at home.’

CHAPTER III

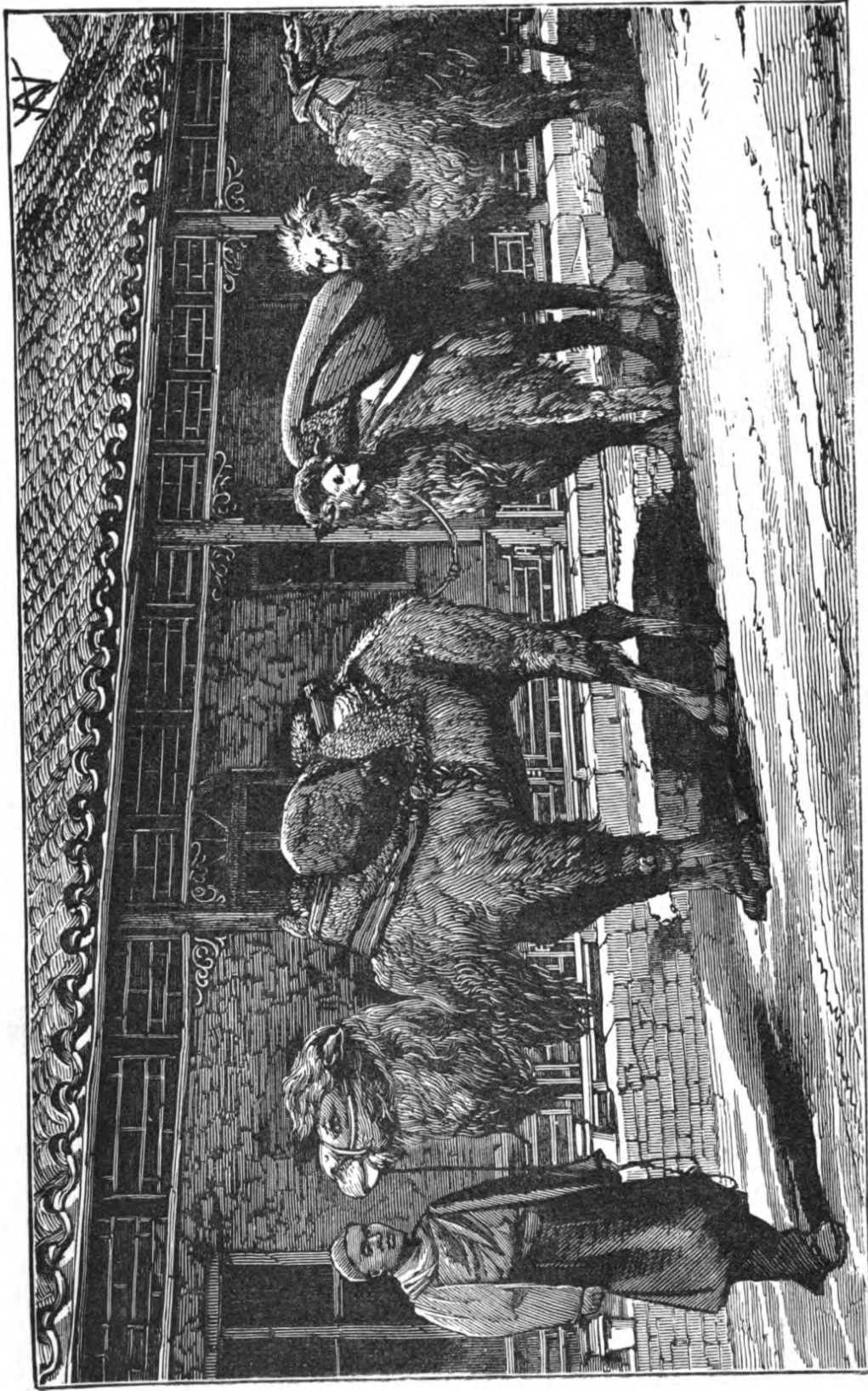
ADVENTURES IN CENTRAL MONGOLIA

WE have now traced Mr. Gilmour through home and school and college, and that most important of all events to a young man—the choice of what he means to be and to do in life. In February, 1870, he sailed from Liverpool for China, in the steamship *Diomed*. The Directors of the London Missionary Society had appointed him to go to Mongolia and reopen a mission which had been at work in that far-off land, and which had been closed by order of the Russians nearly thirty years before. And while he is sailing across the Bay of Biscay, and past the Rock of Lisbon, and the Pillars of Hercules, and through the Mediterranean, and the Suez Canal, and the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and the Straits of Malacca, and on into Chinese waters, we will try and find out to what kind of a country and to what kind of people he is going.

If you take the biggest atlas you can find at home, and open it at the map of China, you will see that the

enormous land of that great empire—the land which holds in it more people than any other empire in the world—is bounded on the north by Mongolia. And away to the north of Mongolia is a vast land called Siberia. To the east is the Sea of Japan, and to the west is the country called Turkestan. So, if asked, as perhaps some of you have been asked in school, to ‘bound Mongolia,’ you can now do it easily : north, by Siberia ; east, by Japan Sea ; south, by China ; west, by Turkestan. Then, if you compare the scale of miles given upon your map of England with the scale of miles given on the map of Mongolia, you will see that half an inch on the *latter* scale means a very much larger number of miles than half an inch on the scale of the England map. That is only another way of saying that Mongolia is very big and England is very small. Mongolia, from east to west, is three thousand miles long ; that is, it is about as wide as the Atlantic Ocean, between, say, Bordeaux and New York. A railway train travelling at forty miles an hour, and stopping neither day nor night, would take seventy-five hours, or more than three whole days and nights, to run across it. From north to south it is nine hundred miles wide—a longer space than separates London from Rome.

But if you went to Mongolia you would see no trains. And to get into Mongolia you would have to climb mountain passes. It is, for the most part,



A CAMEL TRAIN.

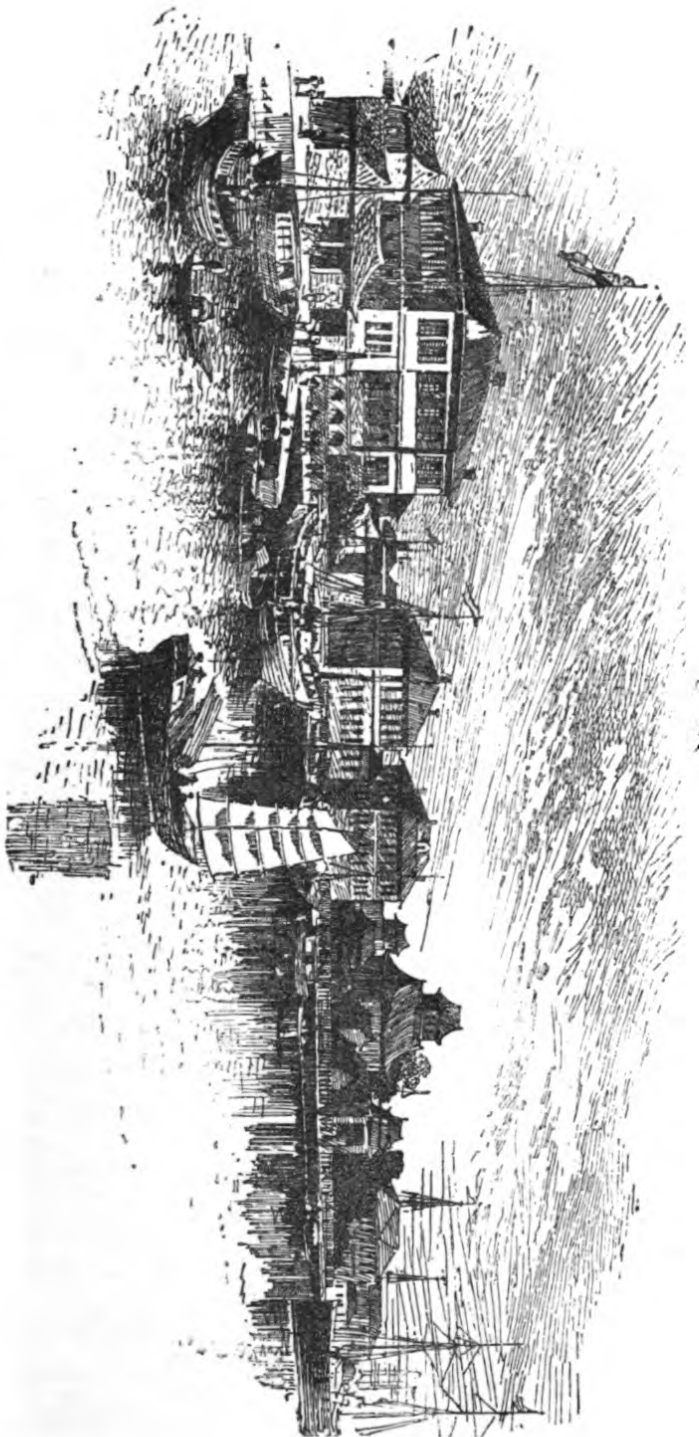
what your geography calls a *plateau*. It is lifted up high above the surrounding countries, and can be reached only by climbing up on to this vast plateau, or table-land. But this table-land stretches away, fairly level, over the greater part of Mongolia. A very large piece of it is called the Desert of Gobi.

The main road across it runs from Kalgan on the Chinese to Kiachta on the Russian frontier. Along this and other roads all the summer pass small and large caravans of camels, camel-carts, and ox-carts. Those coming into China carry salt, soda, hides, and timber; those going out of China are laden for the most part with tea. All the western and central parts of the land are inhabited by nomad Mongols, that is, the people have no fixed villages or towns. They live in tents, they keep flocks, and all through the summer they wander over the country from pasture to pasture. In the winter also they live in tents, which are pitched in regular wintering-places. A fire burns in the middle of the tent, and around this the Mongols sleep. In Eastern Mongolia they sleep upon bedsteads made of bricks, and so built that a fire or hot coals may be kept inside it.

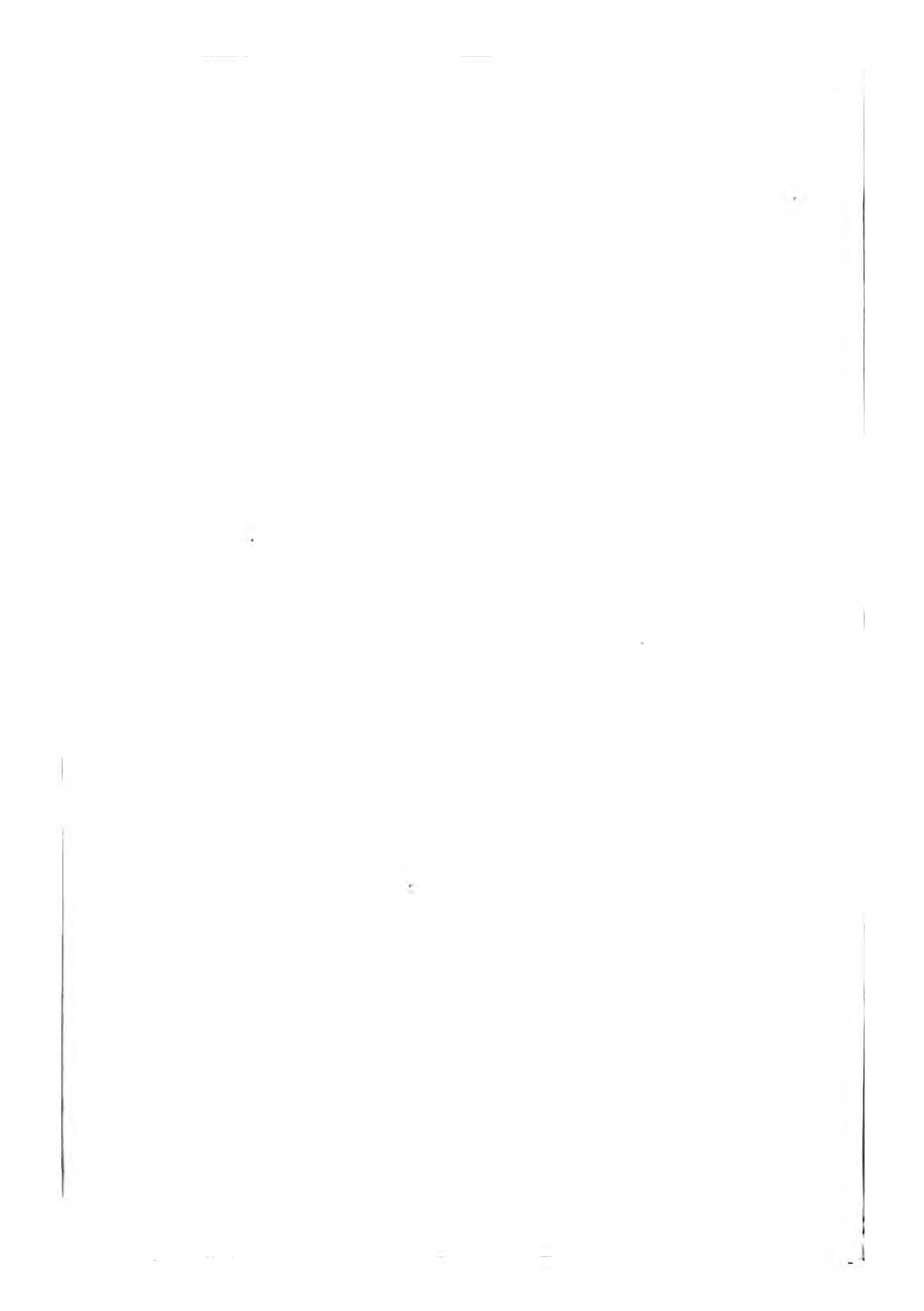
The Mongols speak a language something like the Chinese, but not so difficult to learn either to read or to speak as that tongue. The religion of the country is Buddhism, and about half the men are lamas, or priests. The people believe their

religion to be true. They do not wish to know about Jesus; and it is very hard to get them to listen to His words, and still harder to get them to obey Him. They need Him just as much as we do; for they are sinful, and often ill and wretched and toil-worn, and those who do learn to love Him do so because they believe His words, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

When Mr. Gilmour reached China in 1870 he landed at Shanghai, then went on board another steamer and sailed to Tientsin, and then went on to Peking, the capital of the empire. There he joined what is called the North China Mission of the London Missionary Society, and set about the very hard but very needful work of learning to speak Chinese. The Chinese people do not like foreigners, and, if they were able to do exactly as they liked, they would probably drive all people who were not Chinese out of their country. And only a very short time after Mr. Gilmour reached Peking, the people at Tientsin attacked some Roman Catholics, burnt their hospital and their houses, and killed a number of them. It was feared that the missionaries in Peking might also be attacked, and there was some thought that all foreigners might have to leave the capital. But Mr. Gilmour believed that God could take care of him wherever he was, and so he made up his mind to



A PEEP AT THE HARBOUR, SHANGHAI.



leave Peking, and to go right away to Mongolia, where he expected to spend his life, and learn the language, and see what he could do there.

So away he went, and those of you who have read *Among the Mongols* and *James Gilmour of Mongolia*, know what he did. He lived a long while in a Mongol tent ; he travelled about a great deal, and at last was able to teach the people in their own language all about Jesus and His love. Your elder brothers and sisters, who gained the reward book in 1884, read about many of these journeys. And for you who will naturally want to know how Mr. Gilmour spent the first few years of his life in Mongolia, I have taken from a book published in 1893, and called *More about the Mongols*, the following account, written by Mr. Gilmour himself, of 'One Day in Mongolia.' It will help you to picture the hard, lonely, dangerous work he had to do there :—

'Very early in the morning of March 27, 1873, while it was yet quite dark, some one called from outside the door of the tent. One of the two lamas who slept in the tent with me explained how the door was fastened ; a few seconds more, and some one entered the tent and called *me* : it was time to get up. I recognized the voice of my hostess, and asked, "Has the dawn appeared ?" "No," she replied ; "shall

I light the fire?" "No," said I, groping about till I found a small butter-lamp which had lighted us to bed the night before; "light this, and that will do."

'By the time she returned with the little butter-lamp carefully sheltered between her hands, I had performed the first part of my dressing, and soon was ready to follow her to her tent. As we departed the two lamas asked us to fix up the tent-door again, which we did, and left them to their slumbers. In the tent of my hostess I found a blazing fire and hot tea; the kind woman had been up long before, and had everything ready for me.

'As I drank the reviving tea she gave me a message to convey to her mother, to whom I was going, adding that she had sent the same message long ago, but had never heard whether her mother received it or not. In England a sheet of paper and a penny stamp would have taken the message in a few hours, the distance being only twenty-five miles; but in Mongolia, except by express messengers, intercommunication is difficult, and is carried on mostly by verbal messages conveyed by chance travellers. This is one of the reasons why travellers are so welcome in the tents of the Mongols. A traveller is in some sense a newspaper and a postman.

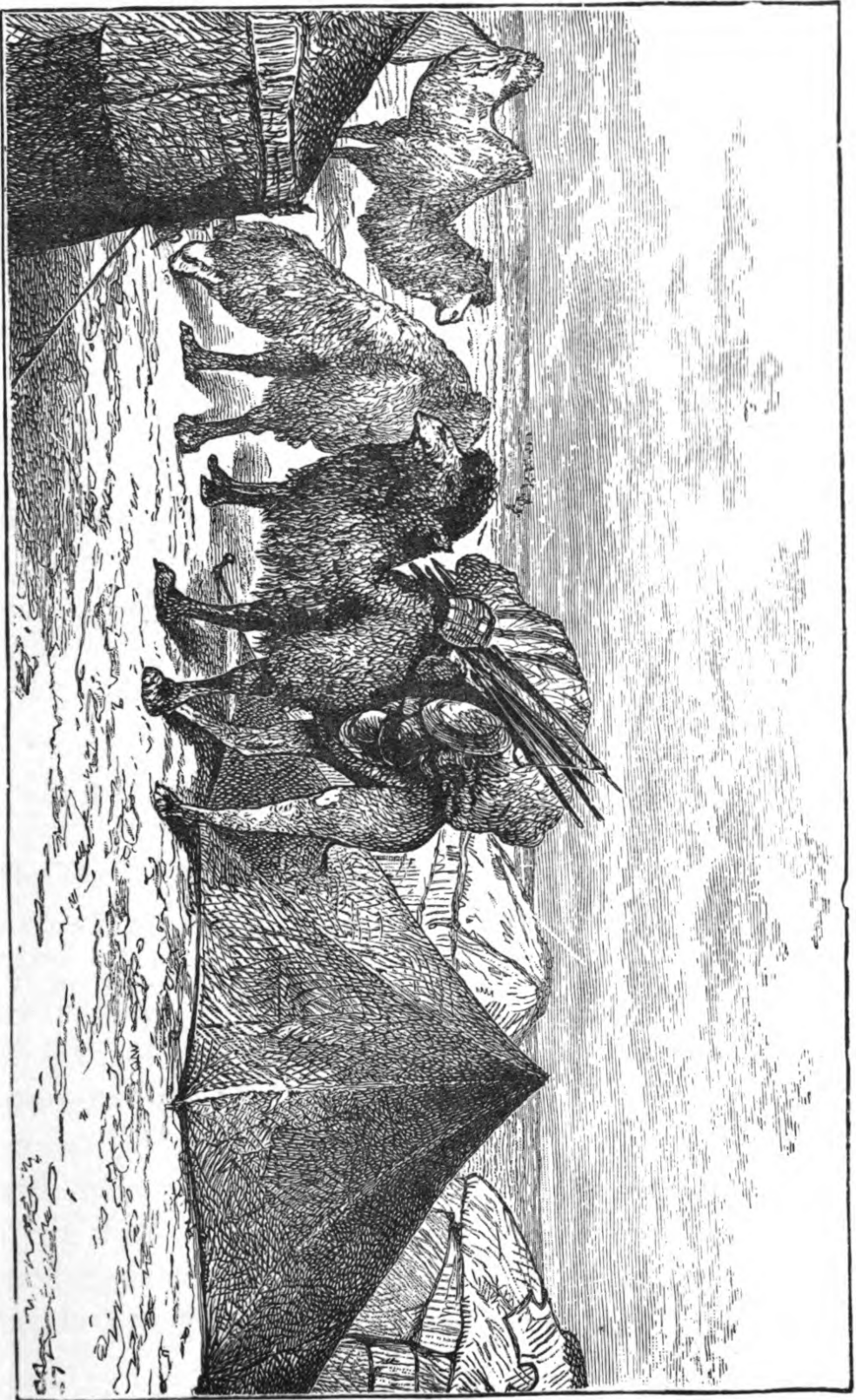
'After she had warmed me well with her bright fire and her warm tea, my hostess went out, brought my camel, made it kneel before the tent-door in the light

of the fire, and assisted me to load and arrange my burden. When this was all finished we again entered the tent; I had a final cup, then led off my camel into the darkness, while my hostess kept the pack of savage dogs in check. As I left the tent a very faint streak of light was visible on the horizon, and I could not help contrasting this Mongolian kindness with that of some who consider themselves more civilized. Some hosts try to manifest their hospitality by detaining their guests as long as possible; this kind woman treated me with the truest hospitality, not only by paying every possible attention to my comfort, but also by complying with my request to call me early enough to enable me to start with the first streak of dawn. In this way she extended to me the most refined and enlightened hospitality. Altogether, she was rather a superior specimen of Mongol women. Among other things, she had the virtue of being industrious, and while I was drinking my tea, and talking with her, she was making thread from hamstrings of cattle. The muscle is buried, then taken up and pounded, after that it separates in fibres, and makes good strong thread for sewing shoes and other leather articles.

‘A short march brought us—the camel and me—to the great road. A year and a half before I had passed through this district in the night, and it was curious to see what different aspects the landscape

presented in the morning light as compared with the impressions I had got of it in the dark. Then, all was vague, uncertain, and gloomy; now, things began to be seen distinctly, and looked bright and hopeful in the morning light. By-and-by the joy of the scene was crowned by the appearance of the great sun, verifying the saying of a Mongol, who, after a dark travel, as the growing disc lifted itself above the horizon, hitched himself round in the saddle and exclaimed, "Glad is the sun to the wayfaring man."

'The scene was now beautiful. The plain, sloping gently upwards, stretched away to the west, dotted here and there with clusters of tents, from around which came the bleating of sheep and the lowing of oxen. Away to the right was a man driving some horses, to water them at a well; to the left the argol-gatherers had come forth to their day's work, attended by their ox-cart. Straight before stood a large drove of horses, satiated with the abundant grass. Idly they stood, bathing themselves in the sunlight, and rolling themselves on the sand. In the midst of this drove I met a lama, richly dressed and mounted on a fine steed. On hearing where I was going, he told me of a nearer road; then, saying that he came from Wu T'ai, that he had been to Russia (he took me for a Russian), and that he was on a business journey, he wheeled his horse, turned his round and cleanly



A MONGOL CAMP.

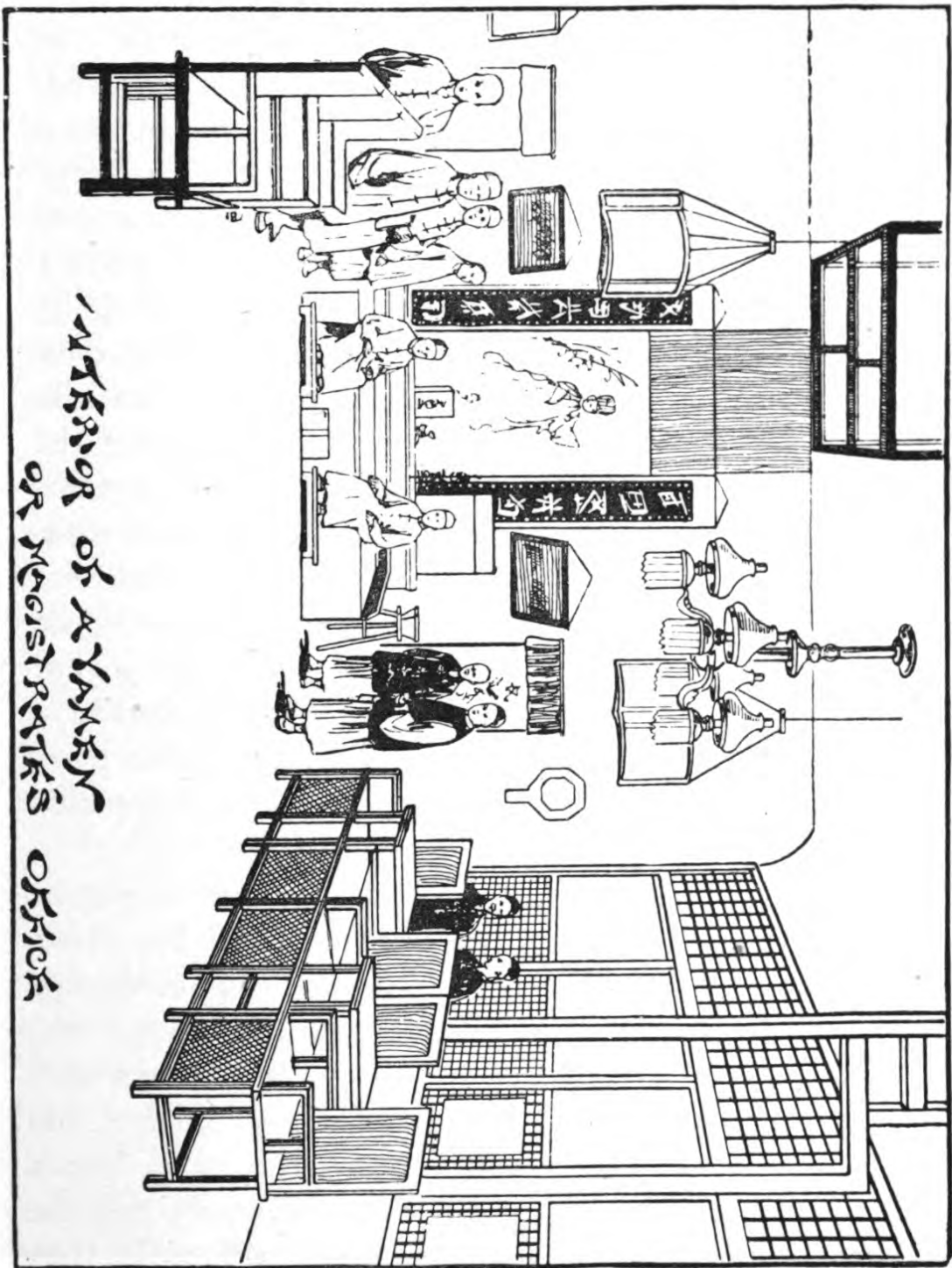


shaven head, and rode off, with his massive silver ornaments glancing in the sun.

'The lama system of Mongolia necessitates the existence of such men. It is true that most of the temples are endowed; in addition to this they receive the offerings of the pious pilgrims and the gifts of the sick; but this is not sufficient, and special begging agents are from time to time sent out to exhort the faithful to make additional offerings. These begging agents are for the most part capable business men; they receive the offerings mostly in cattle, horses, etc., which they drive off and sell, and in this way the final sum realized on a begging expedition depends to a great extent on the ability and address of the agent. Frequently large sums are collected, but accidents sometimes happen. In Peking I made the acquaintance of a lama who had gone out from Wu T'ai on a begging excursion, and in a few months collected a valuable drove of horses and some oxen. These he was driving southwards to the Chinese market, and had almost reached the frontier of Mongolia, when a Mongol, more covetous than pious, seized his horses and cattle, swore that thieves had stolen them, and hinted to the lama that he had better be gone. The lama went to the magistrate and complained; the case came up for trial, the defendant's influence and money carried the day, and the unfortunate lama was thrown into prison, where

he remained a year. After a time a new trial was arranged to come off, the former verdict was reversed, the lama was acquitted, and his oppressor commanded to make restitution of a certain part of the property which was clearly proved to have been appropriated by him. Still the lama was not satisfied, and, when I knew him, was hanging about the yamens in Peking, hoping to be able to institute proceedings that would lead to the restitution of the lost property in full. As he had neither influence to secure the ear of the great men, nor money to buy over the underlings, his chance of success seemed small, and his case altogether miserable, as without the money he could not show his face in Wu T'ai. In token of the wrong he had suffered, he had not shaved his head for a year and a half; his hair was long and gathered up in a knot behind, his purse was empty, his dress was poor, his expedition had failed, and left him an oppressed outcast, an object of pity.

'Hoping that the lama I had just met might be more happy in his expedition, I followed his directions, and soon perceived a feature of the landscape with which I was familiar. This was what the Mongols call the "Bad Wall," originally an earth wall, now reduced to the height of three or four feet, but quite visible, and extending over the plain like a gentle wave. The Great Wall the Mongols call the "White Wall," distinguishing the part of it they



INTERIOR OF A JAPANESE
OR MEISTERSTÄTTE OFFICE

are accustomed to see at Kalgan as the "Kalgan Wall."

'Soon after passing the Bad Wall, I thought I recognized some of the hills as old friends, and left the road to take a short cut to my destination. From the top of a low hill I saw my mistake, and found myself in a strange country, with only a faint path to guide me, and the tents—if such they were—at great distances, and everything so distorted by the mirage that it was impossible to discern anything distinctly. There was nothing for it but to return to the path I had left, and follow that patiently. This I followed for a long time, which seemed much longer than it really was, and at last came upon a cluster of tents.

'Here, as usual, I was well received and regaled with tea, but treated with a little too much familiarity by a young pert lama boy, who presumed on having been introduced to me in Peking, and set about emptying my pockets without the least regard to my wishes. When I asked him to point out my way, he said he did not know the locality, though it was his native place, adding that if I would give him money he would put me all right. Another man to whom I applied informed me that there was no road, but that if I would give him silver money he would tell me how to go. This mean conduct, so unlike the true Mongol frankness, made me anxious to leave the place at once. A poor boy, who seemed

ashamed of the other two, pointed out the direction I should follow, and I started again, wondering at the churlishness of the men who, unless I gave them money, refused to point out my way, and denied me the use of their bucket to draw water from the well for my camel. Such Mongols I have seldom seen, and hope never to see again.

‘A little way on I found a shepherd tending his sheep in Mongol fashion, on horseback. On his back he had a large felt bag, in which he deposited newly dropped lambs. He seemed better-hearted than his neighbours, pointed out my way, and with his lambs at his back rode off, driving his sheep to better pasture. This matter of sheep-tending well illustrates the difference between Mongols and Chinamen. Mongols always watch their flock on horseback; Chinamen never. The Chinaman goes on foot, and thus does the same amount of work equally well, if not better, at less expense. The reason why, in this particular case, the Chinaman can do without the horse necessary to the Mongol is that the Chinaman’s shoes are light, and enable him to walk easily; his garments also are handy, and when he becomes too hot he can throw off his outer jacket. The Mongol’s boots are huge, ill fitting, clumsy, and ill adapted for walking. In them he feels as if his feet were thrust down into a mitigated pair of movable stocks. He has only one coat, warm

enough to keep out the cold, but too heavy and cumbersome to move about in, and so for locomotion he has to trust his horse. Where Mongols and Chinamen come into competition, the Mongol finds himself at a great disadvantage. For almost everything, except mutton and milk, the Mongols are dependent on Chinamen. Chinamen, able to make a living where a Mongol would starve, have encroached much on Mongolia already, are encroaching still, and where they will stop it is impossible to guess.

‘One reason why I was anxious to leave the tent of the mercenary people was that, when I unbuttoned my great-coat, I found my head, neck, and cravat swarming with a species of animal resembling a bed-bug. An enormous number of them seemed to have fixed themselves upon me; even the Mongols were amazed, and began to pick them off. I felt very uneasy at being so infested with vermin as to shock Mongols even, and left as soon as I could. After passing the mounted shepherd, I turned my attention to the animals, and dismissed about two score of them, trying to convince myself that they came from the camel I was riding. Some time afterwards I had occasion to dismount and walk, and in a few minutes found about a dozen of the animals crawling up my trousers. This seemed more unaccountable still, but the secret soon came out: they were in the grass. The Mongols call these animals *sheeljie*. They are a

sort of tick, and appear only in spring. They usually select a tall spear of grass, climb to the top, turn their heads downwards, hold on by four legs, throw out the remaining four, and wait till some animal chances to come that way. As the victim approaches, they throw out another pair of legs, hang to the grass by the remaining pair, and if the animal brushes their perch, they instantly catch the hair, let go their former hold, and are now launched in life.

‘The first thing they seem to do is to climb to the highest point of the animal, then prowl about till they find a convenient spot to insert their thirsty fangs into the juicy skin ; that done, their fortune is made. A few days afterwards they appear transformed into whitish-looking bags of blood, oval in shape, and almost as thick as a man’s finger. When completely filled they let go the skin, but maintain a precarious footing by holding on to the hair or mane. Eventually they drop off. The number of these animals is enormous. I have counted as many as eight or nine on a single blade of grass, and two days of my present journey lay through pastures simply loaded with them. In almost every tent there was set a bowl or pot of water, for the reception of such as the inhabitants caught upon their persons. In one tent, where no water was prepared, I took to throwing them into the fire. This caused a sensation of horror among the pious Buddhist women, who could not

stand the sight of such wholesale murder before their very eyes.

‘To throw the creatures on the ground was useless, as they travel quickly, and seeing me hesitate, and still inclined to throw them into the flames, one of the women solved the difficulty to the seeming satisfaction of the household, by forcing some hot ashes out of the fire, and telling me to throw the animals there, where they perished by a slower and more painful death. On another occasion I asked a woman how it was less of a crime to drown an animal than to burn it. She explained that a *sheeljie* thrown into the fire died; thrown into the water it only suffered suspension of animation, and as soon as thrown out it recovered, scrambled off, and perched itself once more on the grass to try another venture in life. When I doubted the power of the *sheeljie* to live under water, they brought me the bowl, tilted it up a little, and sure enough a whole crowd of them, that seemed to all appearance dead, began to move their legs and stir themselves generally, as if they thought their second chance had come.

‘That morning, while picking the *sheeljie* off my clothes, I almost lost my way, but, remembering I had to pass a hill with a cairn on it, I made for that. At first the hill did not seem very far distant, but after a good deal of travelling it did not seem much nearer, the mirage, as before, making all attempts at guessing

distance useless. After a long and weary march through this pathless plain, at last there appeared a man on an ox-cart with two oxen travelling at quite a rapid pace. His course and mine slowly converged, and at last we met. He had on his cart two bags of grain, and was going off to plough and sow. There are patches of land cultivated by the Mongols, but the cultivation is done in such a careless and lazy way that little comes of it.

‘This man pointed out my route afresh, but seemed rather dubious as to the possibility of my reaching my destination that day. This was strange, as I had been assured overnight that I could get to my journey’s end almost by noon. The last words of the man were, like the postscript of a lady’s letter, the most important. After we had parted, he turned round, and pointing over the plain shouted, “There are two tents there ; the people there will be able to put you on the right road.” I travelled in the direction indicated, and after some time the tents hove in sight. Not far from them were about a dozen men and women gathering argols, but they evidently had no connection with the tents.

‘As I came up to the tents I could see the women running about in a state of alarm, and, in answer to my call to “check the dogs,” two men, a lama and a layman, issued from one of the tents. The women mustered courage enough to follow the men, and there the whole population of the place stood before

me. There was something suspicious and unsatisfactory about the look of the place and the people. The lama rejoiced in no clothing except a pair of skin trousers, the layman was busy throwing a coat about his naked shoulders, the women looked more untidy than even Mongol women usually do, there seemed to be no children about the place; the tents, too, looked disreputable, and their surroundings were unsatisfactory. The conversation that ensued was also discouraging. I could not finish my journey that day, it was not to be thought of, even. There was no road, and there were no tents on the route.

‘On hearing that I came from Peking, the layman concluded that I was a Russian. I said I was not a Russian, but a Britisher. Some more talk took place, and the layman remarked to the other that I was *Mo Orus*. Now, the colloquial *Mo* may be a contraction for either of two words, *Mago*, “bad,” or *Moun*, “indeed,” and, judging from other things, I concluded he meant by his remark that I was of these “wicked Russians”! This was not reassuring, and I felt inclined to go, but I had had quite enough of desolate plain and uninhabited land for one day already, even without running the risk of camping out among the wolves for the night.

‘Just a few days before I had heard of a large number of sheep being killed in a single night by a fierce pack of wolves; might they not come in numbers

enough to devour a single man and a single camel? These considerations, then, urged me to put up for the night where I was. On the other hand, I remembered the saying of a man who had travelled in Mongolia, that to go about as I intended to do, and was then doing, would be dangerous. I remembered also the case of a Russian who went alone, was found dead, and whose death remains a mystery to this day, though every possible means were used to elicit the truth.

‘But there was another consideration, and this decided my course. All along the road Mongols who saluted me asked if I travelled alone and had no revolver. I answered that I did travel alone, and had no firearms. When they expressed astonishment, I hastened to tell them that the God I preached went with me, protected me, and was ever so much better than the best revolver. Beginning from this, I usually went on and gave them a rapid statement of the main points of our religion. They usually listened, and expressed astonished assent. Now, then, there seemed to have arisen an occasion when the excellence of my God as a Protector would be put to the test, and was I not to trust Him? Was all my talking to have no fruit in action? When this thought crossed my mind I at once decided, and said to the layman, “If you’ll have me, I’ll put up with you for the night.” “Have you! Certainly we’ll have you,” said the layman. I moved my camel a few

steps nearer the tent, made him kneel down, dismounted, and entered.

'The inside of the tent looked more unsatisfactory than the outside even, a prominent part of the furniture being three well-appointed Mongol guns, apparently ready for action. As I had hardly ever seen a gun before in any one of the many Mongol tents I had entered, I could not help thinking the presence of *three* guns in one tent strange. Almost as soon as we entered, the layman reduced his dress to the skin trousers and nothing else, said hurriedly, "Drink tea ; I'm busy," and turned his attention to a pot, in which he began rubbing some black powdery substance with a smooth stone. On asking him what he was about, he said, "Making gunpowder ;" and sure enough there he was close by the fire grinding away at it. I thought it dangerous, but said nothing. In a few minutes, however, one of the women remonstrated, and the grinding-pot—the primitive powder-mill—was shifted a little back. After the grinding was finished, it was again damped, passed through the holes in a perforated piece of tin, and set out in the pot to dry in the sun. In a little while it was pronounced dry, and the impatient manufacturer proceeded to test its quality. A little was placed on a piece of wood, and then touched with the red ember of a grass stalk ; but no response. At length, after repeated attempts, the powder took fire,

and blazed rather than exploded. It now appeared that our alarm and dread of an explosion were quite uncalled for ; the article was so poor that even if it had ignited it would have burnt itself harmlessly away. The manufacturer was nothing daunted, but, remarking that it was still damp, put it into a little cloth bag, and hung it from the roof of the tent.

‘Now was my opportunity. The layman seemed inclined to rest, and handed over the pot to his wife to clean. She took a scraper, and always as she scraped off a little heap of black dust, applied a red grass stalk to it, and caused a tiny explosion. I began by asking my host if he could read. He said he could not. I remarked I could, and offered to read him a part of the Mongolian Catechism. He seemed quite pleased with the idea, so I read, and explained as I went on.

‘The lama, who was sitting beyond my host the layman, stretched over towards me and listened ; ever and again assenting vigorously to many of the doctrines propounded. At length the layman, laughing, and in a tone of good companionship, said to the lama, “I suppose you know all about it?” The lama seemed not at all abashed, and when I came to read the commandment, “Thou shalt not steal,” with his open hand gave his companion a great slap on his bare back, and looked at him as if he meant, “That’s into you.” From this I verily thought

my worst suspicions confirmed, and was afraid that I had got into a den of thieves. After some more reading and conversation, the lama took to proposing doctrinal questions, simple enough in themselves, but in his opinion very difficult. The answers were easy enough, but seemed very wise to the lama, who after a while subsided into laughing good humour, remarking that "It was impossible to talk with this man, who always struck the nail on the head; he would kill a fellow." During the reading and conversation I was much pleased with the attention of the women throughout, and especially with the manner in which they regarded and repeated the prayer which, I always teach the Mongols, is the central part of Christianity, "O Jesus, save my soul."

'After this spell at things sacred, the layman bestirred himself, and attended to things secular. He took down one of the three guns, dismantled it, and set about cleaning it. The gun used by the Mongols is very long in the barrel and small in the bore. The stock runs along the whole length of the barrel, and near the muzzle is a two-legged rest attached, that the marksman, who generally lies full length on the ground, may take the surer aim. After unfastening the barrel, our host drew a strand of camel's hair through a hole in the end of the ramrod and washed out the gun; then drew another strand through the same hole and dried it out nicely.

The proper fixing up of the barrel again, and the arranging of the rude matchlock, proved a matter of more difficulty, and before it was finished the lama dressed, caught his horses, and departed.

‘He was a fair specimen of a young and not over-religious lama. He was a great laughier, and evidently a great chum of the black man, our host. These two men illustrated well the difference I have often noticed between the lama and the layman. The lama, however old he may be, is an overgrown boy, frivolous, giddy, and up to tricks. The black man, as the Mongols call the layman, is sedate, sober, and grave—a matured man, in fact. The lama seems unsteady from lacking the cares of a family to ballast him, and though he is for the most part more lively than the black man, yet the black man’s gravity makes pleasanter companionship than the lama’s mirth. The manifest unaccomplished manhood of the majority of Mongol lamas is a very serious argument against celibacy.

‘The lama had hardly gone when another visitor appeared—a young man, a black man, much weather-beaten and brown with exposure to the sun. He was received by his brother-in-law with a hearty welcome, and had to test the newly made powder, and the old powder also, to see which was the better. The old was decidedly so, and the repeated testings to which the new powder was subjected, in the hope that it



MONGOL LAMA, IN FULL DRESS.

might do better, consumed a large percentage of its whole bulk.

‘I said our host was a sedate and sober man : his sedateness was soon put to the test. His old mother entered his tent, and began to talk excitedly and in a loud tone of voice. The son, hearing that it was all about some row over some few argols, said quietly that he would listen to no such matters, and went on fixing his guns. She, nothing daunted, rattled away at a great rate, while her son, beyond now and then uttering an expression of gentle impatience, paid no attention to her words. When she had finished, he asked her some good-natured question about something, and the old woman soon arose to depart, having experienced evident relief from the expression of her feelings. From the young man’s conduct I judged that he was a wise and good son, and shortly after I found that the mother was of the same opinion exactly. She came in, took a seat beside me, and confided to me the whole family circumstances. She and her husband were not rich, but they were in no danger of poverty. They had not large herds, but enough to let them live well and comfortably. They had a son and a daughter. The daughter was at service ; the son was my host, a first-class man, according to her account—a man who owned good guns and killed deer ; a man who was in Government employ, and the sole heir to his father’s good name

and property. In short, the young man exhibited all the virtues of his sire, and was even superior to him in that he did not drink whisky.

‘Afterwards she gave me an account of her journey the year before to Peking, the places she put up in, and the temples where she worshipped. This was my opportunity, and I told her how our religion does not require us to go on long pilgrimages to pray, that wherever we are we are equally near to God, and that prayer is just as acceptable in one place as in another.

‘When our religious conversation ended, I borrowed a knife and a basin, and gave out mutton and flour for dinner. All were pleased and helpful, and when I confessed that I was not much of a cook, the old mother said her son was a great hand at making dinner. The son, with the greatest good humour, washed his hands and took the dinner in hand. He proved himself quite worthy of the praise his mother had bestowed on him, and quickly set my dinner steaming before me. I set to work, and his mother, who meantime had gone out, returned, and, at her son’s request, took the seat of highest honour in the tent. I wanted her to share my dinner, and, after some pressing, she consented to eat a little. Over our dinner we became faster friends, and much more confidential, and in the conversation that ensued I had several opportunities of introducing Christian topics and doctrine.

'At eventide I went out to the plain to meditate, and, when the sun had fairly set, led home my camel and fastened him up for the night. On entering the tent I found my host's father had come home; the usual salutations took place, and then he began to ask about the object of my journey. I introduced him to my books and tracts, and, as he did not read, took the opportunity to explain them to him, telling him specially about Christ and His salvation. The weather-beaten, tough old man listened well and respectfully, and as he was about to leave I asked him about to-morrow's road. Taking his pipe from his mouth, and suiting the action to the word, he drew lines confusedly through each other on the same spot of the floor-felt, saying, "When you leave here go on till you come to a stone fold, from that go to the well, then don't go the road that runs so, but follow the road that runs so; then you'll come to a great road that runs so, cut it through so, and go on so till you come to another stone fold with a three-mouthed well; then don't take the road that runs so, but take the road that runs so; after that you will come to a great road that runs so, follow it a little, then cut it through so, then pass the white cairn so, and you are near your destination." Having thus given me the "marks of the road," he departed to go to his own tent, and left my head turning in a maze of three-mouthed wells, great roads, cross-roads, and stone folds.

‘We now supposed we were alone for the night, and our host—whom his mother had described as such an excellent teetotaler—produced a jar of whisky and a pewter feeding-bottle. The feeding-bottle is the same in principle as the infant’s feeding-bottle, only the article used by the Mongols has no glass or indiarubber about it. It is made of pewter, and in common use in Mongolia.

‘As the bottle was about to be filled, a step was heard approaching. The teetotal reputation was in danger, and jar and bottle quickly disappeared into a small cupboard. The visitor was a woman; she must have smelt the spirit, but was too wise to say anything, or probably she was in the secret. After she departed, the hidden articles reappeared, and the feeding-bottle was so frequently sucked that twice it was emptied before it was finally put away in the cupboard, where were kept the official cap, the silk coat, and the silver ornamented belt.

‘Even the remote and sparse population of Mongolia escape not the curse of drink, and melancholy wrecks of health and fortune have no effect in restraining young men from joining the already too numerous band of drinkers. Here was a young man choosing destruction, with his eyes open to the evil and danger of his course. About a month before, a few miles away, a young man of about thirty-three paid his father a visit, mounted his horse to ride

home, and when next seen he was lying dead with the blood oozing from his ears and mouth. This young man was one of my special friends, and the first-born and right hand of his aged father. "How came he to fall from his horse?" I asked again and again of those who knew him. "Don't know," was all the answer I could get for a time, but at last the truth came out. He had been drinking, and the drink slew him within half a mile of his father's tent.

'The evil of drink is admitted by all, but custom, the good ally of the devil, requires the mistress of the house to set it before her visitors. I, as a teetotaler, always refuse it, and speak of its evil, and in most cases even those who offer it agree heartily with what I say, and add with emphasis, "Drink is indeed evil." The desolation, poverty, misery, sin, and death caused by drink in Mongolia are as great as elsewhere, and its fatal fascination seems even stronger than elsewhere. With many Mongols the only limit to drinking seems to be the bottom of the jar. Poverty and inability to procure drink keep many a man sober for weeks, who in other circumstances would soon kill himself.

'The main predisposing causes to drink I conceive to be extreme sameness of diet, and inability, from ignorance and want of books, to experience intellectual pleasures. Humanly speaking, schoolmasters and cooks might do much for Mongolia. My host,

it is true, kept well inside the bounds of moderation, but it was sad to see this rather superior young man, with a good start in life and rising prospects, acquiring a habit which blights more prospects and ruins more men than all the droughts and snowstorms which scatter white bones to bleach on the wide plains of Mongolia.

'After dark our host happened to step outside the tent, and instantly we heard a loud *H oi!* an exclamation of surprise. We all rushed out, and, lo, the whole eastern horizon seemed in a blaze. "There is a great fire," said the Mongols, and, true enough, a great fire had broken out. The day before I had noticed distant clouds of smoke ascending to the sky; that day I had passed within perhaps ten miles of smoking hills, but it was only when the lurid flame glared red in the darkness that the extent of the conflagration could be seen. From our point of view the fire seemed to extend in one unbroken line for many miles. Along one half of the line of fire only a red glare could be seen, as some higher ground cut off our view, but along the whole length of the other half the living flame leaped up in some places to a seeming height of about six feet. It was truly a fearful sight. Even my camel was alarmed, and had shifted his position so that he could lie down watching it.

'The Mongols speculated excitedly as to the locality of the fire, and then raised the all-important

question, "How does the wind blow?" One of the number threw a handful of ashes in the air, and all felt relieved as the dust was seen to float slowly from the tent towards the fire. A good deal of rapid talking followed, all of which I could not make out, but the drift of the conversation seemed to be that the father judged the fire to have originated at the cultivated land, and the son accounted for its doubling back towards them by the fact that a rash neighbour had been foolish enough to kill a goat. One of the women asked an important question, "Has it crossed the great road?" Sometimes, when the dry grass catches fire, nothing but a great road will stop it. Sometimes it is said that these fires rush along so fiercely that even the tents cannot be protected from them, but in our case the only question was the loss of the pasture. If the wind had turned and blown towards us, the whole plain might have been left black and bare, and the inhabitants compelled to seek other pasture. The cattle, during the winter, had rendered the tents safe by cropping all the grass close away, and as there was still a great road between the fire and us, we said our prayers and prepared for bed.

'The sight of the fire, I think, rendered the Mongols more fervent in their devotions, reminding them how utterly helpless they were in the presence of such a phenomenon, and how completely, in such circumstances, they were dependent upon a Higher Power

who ruled the winds. The husband counted his beads and mumbled his charms ; the wife asked him to remove the loaded gun which he had placed near the altar, and then went through a long series of prostrations, accompanied by muttered prayers. Though they were more devout than usual, they looked about and made remarks in a manner which proved that, as usual, their worship was that of the body and the lip only, extra fervency of devotion being manifested in the increased quantity, not in the quality, of the worship.

‘ Finally, we all lay down to sleep, the Mongols to dream of the wildfire, and I thankful that I had been detained in this tent, in which I had so many opportunities of instructing this family in the things of Christ.

‘ After a good night’s rest, broken occasionally by confused visions of fire, great roads, cross-roads, stone folds, and three-mouthed wells, daylight began to peep into our tent, and warned us that the night was past. In the morning no trace of the fire was visible anywhere near ; what in darkness had seemed near was indeed miles and miles away.

‘ After drinking tea, my host pointed out my way so clearly that, though a little intricate, I threaded it out without much difficulty. I never saw him again, but I retained the most lively sense of his kindness, and feel sure that he called me not “ a wicked Russian,” but a “ Russian indeed.” ’

CHAPTER IV

LIFE AND WORK IN EASTERN MONGOLIA

JAMES GILMOUR spent fifteen years in learning the Mongol and Chinese languages, in travelling about that part of Mongolia named the Desert of Gobi, and in visiting the scattered tents of the Mongols. As we have already pointed out, they do not have houses, but they live in tents. They do not farm much. They live by raising cattle. They never stay long in one place, except in winter, when they have to, but they wander from pasture to pasture, and from camp to camp. You can easily see how hard missionary work must be among people of this kind. Then they naturally have a very good opinion of their own religion, and at first they think it quite as good as Christianity. They also have a great many priests, or lamas, and almost all of their daily habits have to do with their religion. Hence, if a Mongol becomes a Christian, it is hardly possible for him to stay with his friends. He has to leave them, and he hardly knows what to do for a living,

and his friends get so angry with him that they will not speak to him, and will not have anything to do with him.

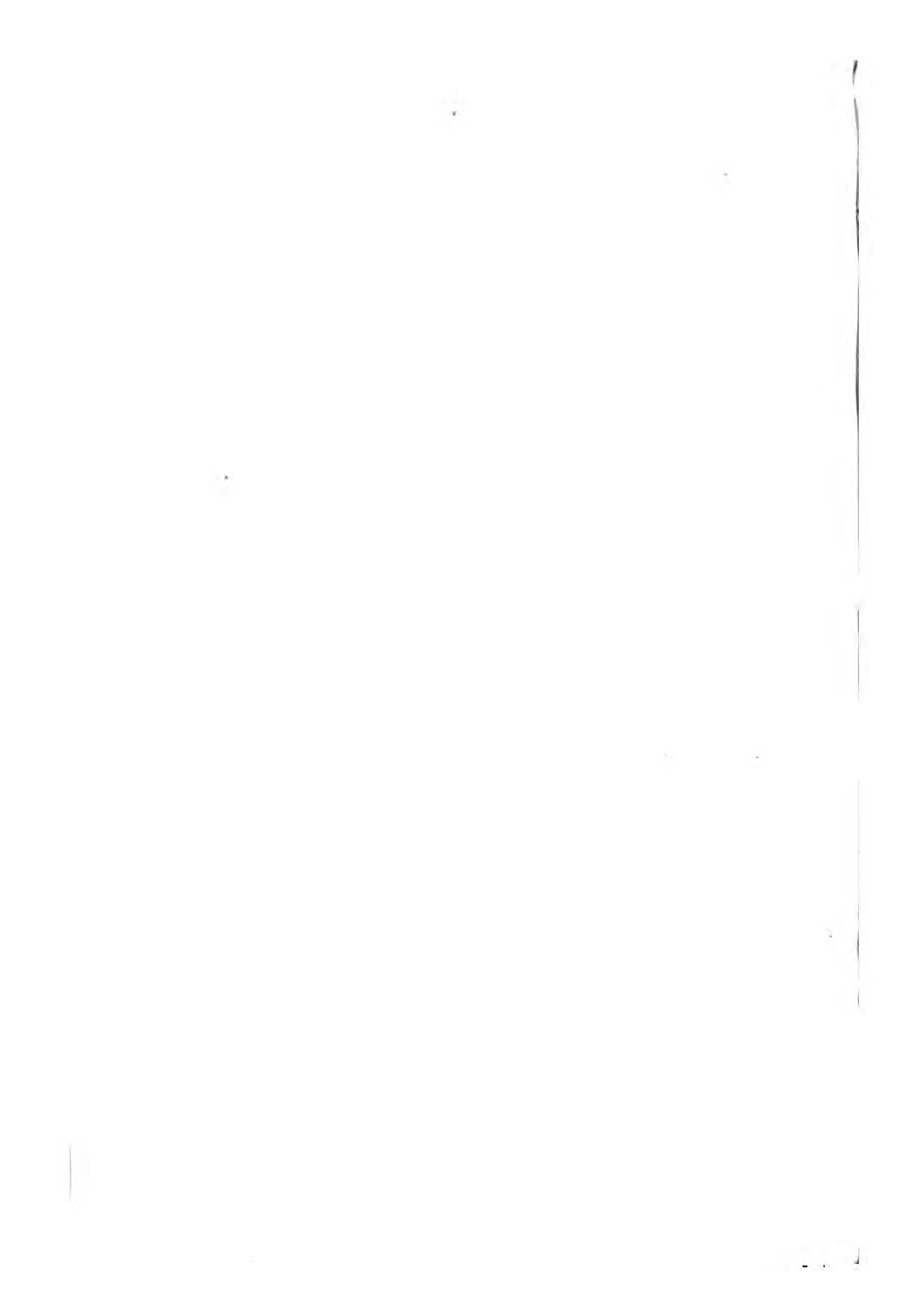
So, after many years' work, Mr. Gilmour decided to try and form a strong mission in Eastern Mongolia, where a good many of the Mongols have taken to farming, hoping that, when he had made some converts among these, he might be able, through their help, to win over those who spend their lives in wandering over the broad Mongolian plains. The letters contained in this book begin in 1886, when Mr. Gilmour had just decided upon this change of plan.

In 1874 Mr. Gilmour had married Miss Prankard, a lady who went out from England to become his wife, and who learned to speak the Mongol language, and to love them very much. And she was so brave that she twice spent the summer travelling about the plain with her husband, and sleeping in a tent, and enduring hardships which are terrible even to think about. It is hard enough for a brave and strong man to go through the toils and privations of Mongolian life, but it is much harder for a lady, and it is to be feared that her self-denial in this way for the Mongols she and her husband so wished to win for Jesus, shortened her life.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour had three little boys—James and Willie, to whom afterwards their father wrote so



MRS. GILMOUR IN 1874.



many, and often such very long, letters; and Alexander, who died when he was quite an infant. The married life of Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour was not very long. After she found that she could not stand the hard life of Mongolia, Mrs. Gilmour did some very good work among the Chinese girls in Peking. And during the winter Mr. Gilmour himself used to live in the missionary compound in the Chinese capital, and preach in the native chapels, and work also among the Mongols, many of whom come to Peking in the cold season.

In 1885, not quite eleven years after her wedding, Mrs. Gilmour became so very ill that it soon became clear to her friends that she could not live very much longer. In September she died, leaving her three little boys motherless. After anxious thought, Mr. Gilmour decided to send James and Willie home to his friends in Scotland. Alick, the baby, was to stay for the present with his aunt, Mrs. Meech, in Peking. Meanwhile, though it tried the father's heart very sorely, the others had to be sent away to the other side of the globe. Just before they sailed, Mr. Gilmour wrote a letter, from which we take two or three passages.

'The laddies are here with me now, and I am both father and mother to them. To-night I darned three stockings for them when they went to bed. You see I have been away two months, and in a week or two

I may have to part from them for ten years, so I am having a little leisure time with them. I sometimes do feel real bad at the idea of the two orphan lads going away so far ; but then the promise of Christ that no one leaves parents or children for His sake, without being repaid manifold, comforts me by making me believe that God will raise up friends to comfort them wherever they may be.

'I had five hours' conversation with one Chinaman at a stretch the other day. I think he was not far from the kingdom of God at first, and I believe he is nearer now. All these things take time, and I am most anxious to be with the children much these last days. Oh, it is hard to think of them going off over the world in that motherless fashion ! We were at mama's grave yesterday for the first time since September 21. We sang, "There's a land that is fairer than day," in Chinese, and also a Chinese hymn we have here with a chorus, which says, "We'll soon go and see them in our heavenly home," and in English, "There is a happy land." The children and I have no reluctance in speaking of mama, and we don't think of her as here or buried, but as in a fine place, happy and well.'

In Chapter III. you have learned something about the hard life Mr. Gilmour lived on the great plain of Mongolia, the Desert of Gobi. Nearly every spring-time he used to go to Kalgan, and there hire





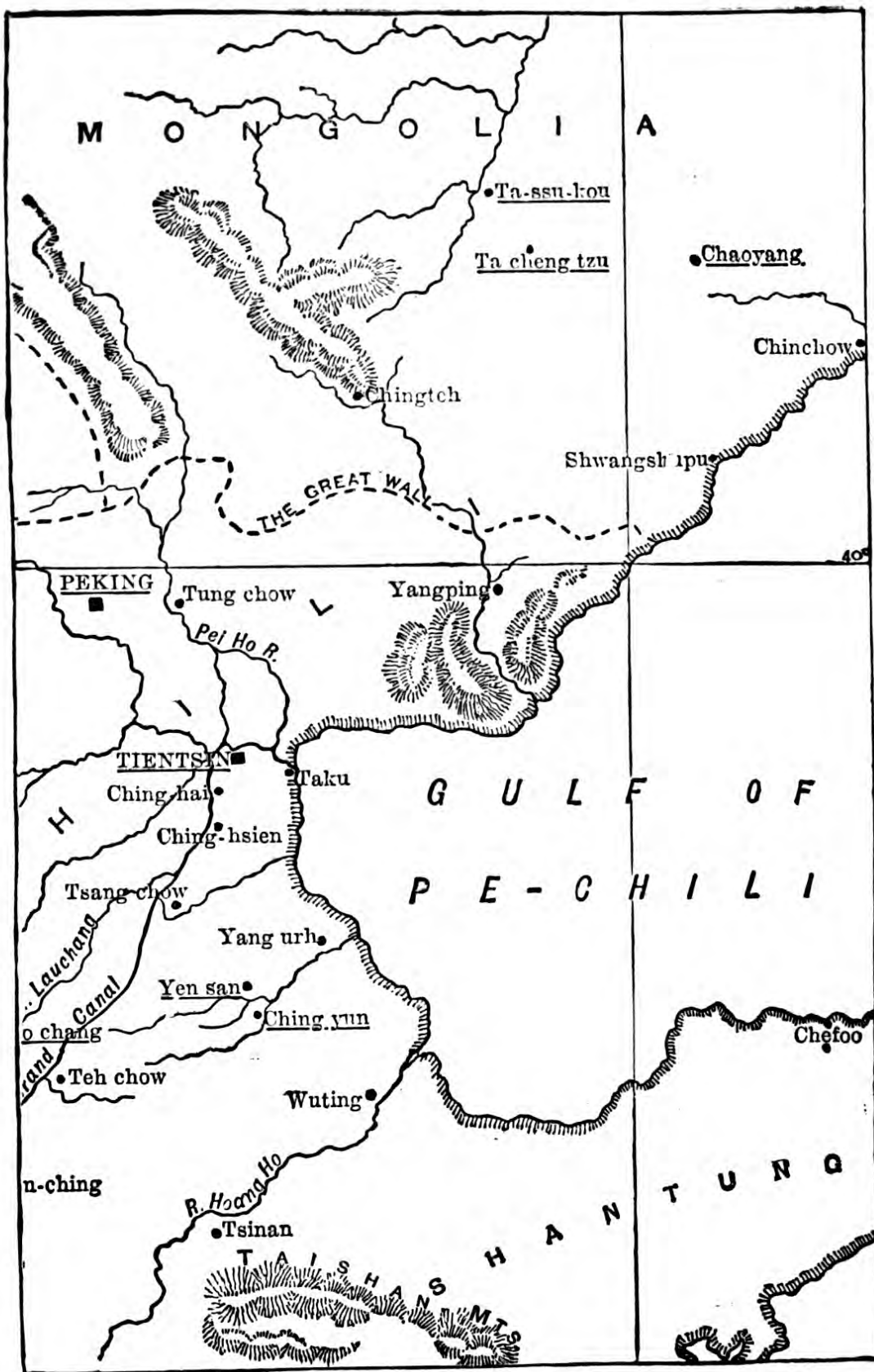
JAMES GILMOUR EQUIPPED FOR HIS WALKING EXPEDITION
IN MONGOLIA IN FEBRUARY, 1884.

camels or a camel-cart, and one or two Mongols to journey with him, and then travel about all the summer, visiting the Mongol tents, doing what he could to heal their diseases, and telling all who would listen about the love and the mercy of the Saviour. This he did nearly every year, from 1872 to 1882. In the latter year he came to England for his first and well-earned furlough. He returned to Peking in November, 1883, and in February, 1884, he made one of the most remarkable journeys of his life. He had not been able to visit any of his Mongol friends for nearly three years; he was anxious to visit them, and learn how matters had gone with them. The time at his disposal, and the season of the year—winter—prevented him from getting camels and his old travelling Mongols. But he thought little of hardship and danger when doing what he felt to be God's work. And so, dressing himself as you see in the engraving, taking his life in his hand, and trusting wholly in God's care, he *walked*, in mid-winter, out into the great snow-covered plain. All who met him, and even the friends whom he came to see, were amazed. As he himself tells us, 'The Mongols are familiar with the Russians, who, as tea-agents, reside in Kalgan; they have seen many passing foreign travellers on horses, camels, and in carts; they have seen missionary journeys performed on donkeys and ox-carts; but I think that

that morning for the first time they had seen a foreigner, with all his belongings hung about him, tramping the country after the manner of their own begging lamas. There were few people to meet, but those I did asked questions in tones of great surprise, evidently disbelieved my answers, and rode away muttering, *You eldib eem!* ("Strange affair!"). My feet soon showed symptoms of thinking this style of travelling as strange as the Mongols did, and were badly blistered long before the journey was over.' He started on February 19, 1884, and returned to Peking on March 21, after a time of terrible suffering.

For the rest of 1884, and the whole of 1885, Mr. Gilmour had to remain in Peking, during the absence in England of the Rev. S. E. Meech, his fellow-worker; and on September 19, 1885, Mrs. Gilmour died. During this period Mr. Gilmour reached an important decision about his work. This was to give up for the present trying to reach the Mongols who wander over the plain, and, instead of this, find some town or village to which large numbers of Mongols came, make that the centre of a mission, and then, when some Mongols became Christians, send them to teach their countrymen. The place he finally chose was Ta Ch'eng tzu, and afterwards Ch'ao Yang. You can see on the map exactly where this place is, namely, about two hundred and seventy miles to the north-east of Peking. The letters which





MAP OF EASTERN MONGOLIA.

follow tell you, in Mr. Gilmour's own words and way, how he carried on work in this district. Though not much further from Peking than Plymouth is from London, it used to take Mr. Gilmour nine days' hard travelling to get there. He paid his first visit between December 14, 1885, and February 16, 1886, and from the latter date he spent the greater part of the remaining years of his life in that region. On March 23, 1886, he parted from his boys at Tientsin, and on April 22 he left Peking for his new field of work.

The first letter of the long series to his boys which we are able to print, was begun on April 28. There is no regular post in Mongolia. Letters have to be sent by special messengers, paid by the person who writes or who receives the letter. Sometimes Mr. Gilmour was many weeks without being able to send, and, of course, without receiving, any letters. If you look at this one, you will see that it was written at five different places, and, though begun on April 28, was not finished until June 29—two months later. Here it is—

Jê Ho, five days from Peking, April 28, 1886.

MY DEAR SONS JIM AND WILL,

How are you? I am on a journey to Mongolia. I am having wet weather, which is detaining me, but is good for the crops, so I am glad. I have a young man called Yang with me. He is a Christian, and helps me to preach. I have your photographs

with me, and I take them out at the inns and look at them. I like to see your faces; I don't feel so lonely then. I often, very often, pray for you, and try to think where you are in the ship now. You should be near the Red Sea. Oh, my dear boys, it was so hard to leave you, and I often cry yet when I think of you! I pray to Jesus to make you happy. I hope you'll grow up to be good and useful men. If you are earnest Christians, I think it would be nice if you became missionary doctors, and come out to heal the people's diseases, just as mama did, and tell them about Jesus. Don't you think so?

It rained on Friday, and a day or two after we came to a place where there was a great stone, about seven or eight feet in diameter, which had rolled down from a high place on to the road. The mules were very much scared to see it lying there on the road. If it had come down when we passed, it would have smashed our cart. A little before that we passed a dead camel on the roadside. We met the men a little while before carrying its saddle, and when we came to the carcass the mules were afraid.

I wonder when I'll see you two again. Remember you are to have your photographs taken once every year and sent to me. Take them next April, when you'll be just ten years old.

My dear boys, pray to Jesus that some of the Mongols and Chinese around me at Ch'ao Yang



CHINESE SCHOOL-GIRLS LIKE THOSE MRS. GILMOUR TAUGHT.

12.5

12.5

12.5

12.5

may become Christians. There is a very nice grave stone come for mama, but it is not to be set up till October, when the ground will have settled down after the rain. I have no idea when I'll get this letter off to you. I am writing it to be ready to send when an opportunity comes. Good-bye, my sons.

Ch'ao Yang, Friday, May 14, 1886.

I got here eight days ago, and am living in a room in an inn. At Ta Ch'eng tzu, the place where I was last winter, there are some people who say they would like to be Christians, but they are afraid of the heathen. Pray for them, that they may be bolder. Travelling about here, I see lots of things you would like to see. Such beautiful big cocks walking about with their hens, looking for food for them. The cocks are kind to the hens, and when they find food don't eat it themselves, but call the hens to come and eat it, and the hens run so fast. The other day a carter chased away a cock and his hens from the mule's manger, where they were stealing the corn, and the cock was so very angry. He stood about the yard cackling and making a great noise for a while ; he did not want his hens chased like that.

The people are very poor here. Last year the crops were not good. When the leaves come out on the trees the poor people break off branches and eat the seeds of the elm trees. I saw one mama up a high tree taking down the seeds. She took off half

the door, laid it up against the tree, went on the cross-bars like a ladder, and so got up. She threw down the little branches and twigs, and her three children below gathered them up. The children had no trousers on, but it was good warm weather. After the rain the children in the villages come out naked and play in the mud and water. They run about the fields, too, naked, with only a pair of shoes on. After the rain people were so busy sowing. The plough goes first. Then comes a man or boy with a gourd with a long pipe sticking out, pointing down to the furrow. As he goes along he keeps tap, tap, tapping the pipe with a stick, and so the seed runs out little by little into the furrow. Then comes a donkey pulling a harrow, and that covers up the seed. Then comes a donkey or a man with a small stone roller, and that presses it down. After a while it needs to be rolled again, the soil is so light. I saw a mule dragging along a form lying on its side to level down the ridges. It was so funny to see a form with its legs sticking out so used.

The other day I saw a papa and his little boy going along the road. The boy was such a little fellow, and his papa let him lead the donkey. The donkey was a wise old donkey, and did not mind the boy a bit. It just went on itself. The little boy would run fast and go before, and walk slow and fall behind, but the donkey just went on all the

same. The donkey knew the boy was only a baby and could not be trusted. I saw another little boy leading the donkey on which his mama sat. Papa walked behind. They both smiled at the little boy. He was so little that he had to run to keep up with the donkey, though it was not walking fast at all. I saw a little boy, too, leading a blind fiddler. I laughed the other day to see a cock in the rain. His hens were all at home, but he thought himself so important that he had to go out on some business or other. You should have seen him coming back with his feathers all draggled. He looked such a poor figure as he ran along in the mud.

I have no watch with me. The Chinese trouble me so to see it that I think it best to leave it at home. It was *so* nice when in an inn at Pa Kow to hear a clock striking in a shop in the yard. I passed, one day, a very strange mountain which had been split in two. Its name was Split Mountain.

I met three lamas going to a far-off place to worship. Every two or three steps they lay down flat on the ground, then got up and walked other two or three steps, then prostrated themselves again. They did not know about Jesus saving people, and thought they would save themselves in that way. Poor people! Yet they don't like to hear about Jesus saving the people. They want the credit of thus saving themselves. The elm seeds are just ripe

now. They are the size of large fish-scales; when the wind blows they come down like snow. The weather is hot here now. People come to see me



A CHINESE PAGODA.

in my inn. Not very many, though. I go out on to the street to preach, and one day preached in a fine shade. It was the shadow of a pagoda. There are two pagodas here. Long years ago there used

to be three. One was taken down and a temple built with the bricks.

In the inn where I am is a mother-pig with twelve (I cannot count them well, they run about and mix up so) or so little pigs, all black.

You should be home now, May 14. I wonder if you are? Pray to Jesus for me every day. Pray that Chinese and Mongols may become Christians, and then I'll be glad, and Jesus will be glad too. A man has just come in, so I must stop writing and speak to him.

Lan Ni T'ang, Friday, May 20, 1886.

I am on my way to Ta Ch'eng tzu. I have a donkey to carry my baggage. A Mongol drives it. It has a lot of bells on a band round its neck. I have had a good time of it in Ch'ao Yang on the whole. It is very hard work preaching there. There are some people, though, who think about what is good, and one or two people have shown themselves friendly. The country is beautiful. The trees are green. The crops are just sown, and coming up through the ground. Everybody is busy hoeing the weeds. The emperor was sending grain to the poor here, but has stopped it now that the poor people have got work. I hope you have written me a lot of letters. I would like to see them, and know how you got on going home. Meantime good-bye, my dear lads.

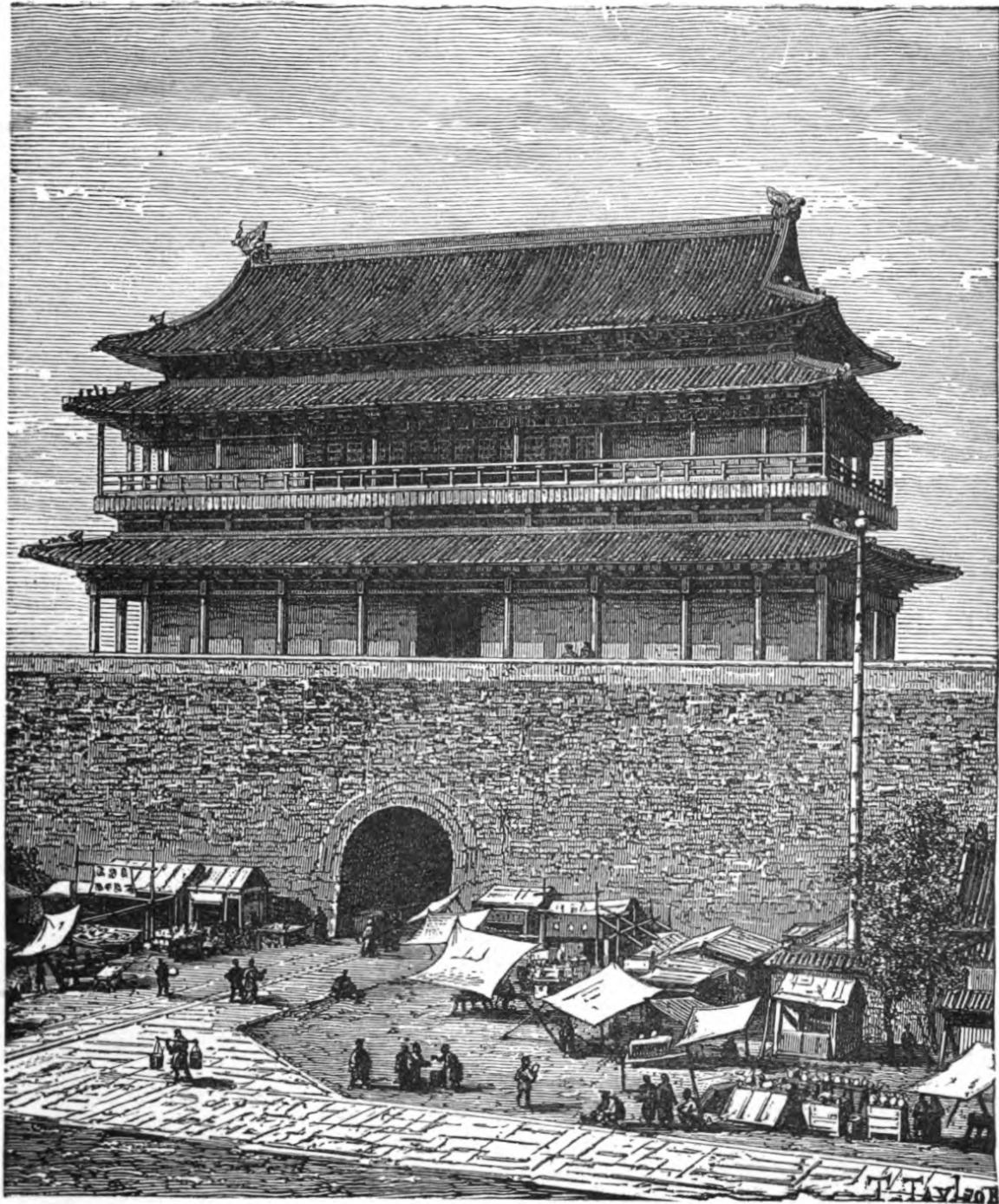
T'a Ssü Kow, Saturday, June 19, 1886.

I think much about you and often about you. I pray much for you. I would like to see you. I look at your photographs often. I have had a busy month of it. At Ta Ch'eng tzu there was a fair. Here there was a fair lasting six days at each place. I preached a great deal at Ta Ch'eng tzu. Here I had a cloth screen or awning made, and went out with my medicines. I had a run of patients almost from morning till night. People are very friendly to us here, but no one comes forward to confess Christ. We have not been very long here yet, and I suppose must not be in a hurry.

By the time this reaches you I suppose you will be at school. I hope you will be diligent boys, and do your lessons as well as you can. Do your lessons first, and then play as much as you like afterwards.

Ola Hada, Tuesday, June 29, 1886.

Mr. Brown [a colporteur] is going back to Peking in a day or two, and I am going on from here to Ch'ao Yang. We had to come in from the street on account of rain, so I am writing to you. We have been here (ten days from Peking) five or six days, preaching and selling books on the street from morning till night. The days are long indeed. I am eager to get letters about you. Cheer up, my dear sonnies. We shall see each other some day



THE PRINCIPAL GATE OF PEKING.



yet. Tell all your troubles to Jesus, and let Him be your Friend. I know God will take care of you.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Ch'ao Yang, September 3, 1886.

MY DEAR BOYS,

Your photographs are before me on the table, and I look at you as I write. I have heard nothing from you for four and a half months now, but I hope in a few days to go to the sea coast and get home-letters. I pray for you very often. I think you pray for papa. Pray for the Chinese, that they may become Christians. Two Chinese have become Christians at Ta Ch'eng tzu. Pray that many more may do so.

I wrote you last June 29 at Hada. Six days' journey brought us here. The last two days were very hot, and I got here ill. All July I was poorly, had some fever, could not eat much, but was able to go on with my mission work as usual. There were two great fairs here, and I was anxious not to lose the opportunity, so I stuck to my work, going out to the fair with my tent. We had a great many patients, and told many people of Jesus. A good many people say the teaching and religion is good, but they are afraid to enter it. We are strange to them yet.

In the beginning of August we hired a cart to go to Ta Ch'eng tzu. Thirty li from Ta Ch'eng tzu the cart-wheel broke down. They tied it up with ropes. We got to an inn, four li away, and next day rode the mules to Ta Ch'eng tzu while a carpenter mended the wheel. At Ta Ch'eng tzu we had seven days' and seven nights' rain. It was a great flood. The river rose and washed away about a hundred acres of land and forty or fifty houses. For two days the river floated down house-roof, timbers, beams, etc. I saw two live hens go down sitting on part of a house-roof. Another poor hen floated past, sitting in the water like a duck, only deeper down and sinking like. One poor man pulled down his house to save the timbers, and the house fell on him and killed him. It was pitiful to see the river washing away good land, two square yards falling into the roaring flood at a time. The Chinamen did nothing, only stood and looked at it. Lots of walls and many houses fell down. One house in the court next our inn fell down one morning after the rain was all over. The people had just time to jump out at the window. No one was hurt. Our room did not leak much, but the outside of the wall towards the street fell down. The inside of the wall still stood, so our room was whole. Chinese walls are all built in two skins. The one may fall and the other stand.

At Ta Ch'eng tzu I was not well—had dysentery, a slight attack—but I got well all right. I am so thankful to be well again. At Ta Ch'eng tzu two men professed Christianity, as I have said in my letter before. The one is a restaurant man, who is very earnest. The other sells melons and fruit on the street, also scones, according to the season of the year. The profession of these two men made me very joyful and thankful. I hope there may be more follow their example. Nothing makes me so happy as to see men converted. From Ta Ch'eng tzu we could scarcely get away. The rain had ruined the roads. Carts could not go, and our Mongol was not willing to go with his donkey. He went, though ; but the road was very bad, and at one place we had to go over hills because the road down below was not fit to travel on. From here I am going to Niuchuang as soon as I can get mules ; but they are not easy to find just at present. I'll write some more at Niuchuang.

Now, my two dear sons, may Jesus be near to you and bless you much in your life and lessons. I do so hope that you will keep on praying to Jesus, and doing the things which Jesus likes, as mama did. Don't forget your prayers, my sons.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

The Sea, Wednesday, September 15, 1886.

MY DEAR SONS JIM AND WILLIE,

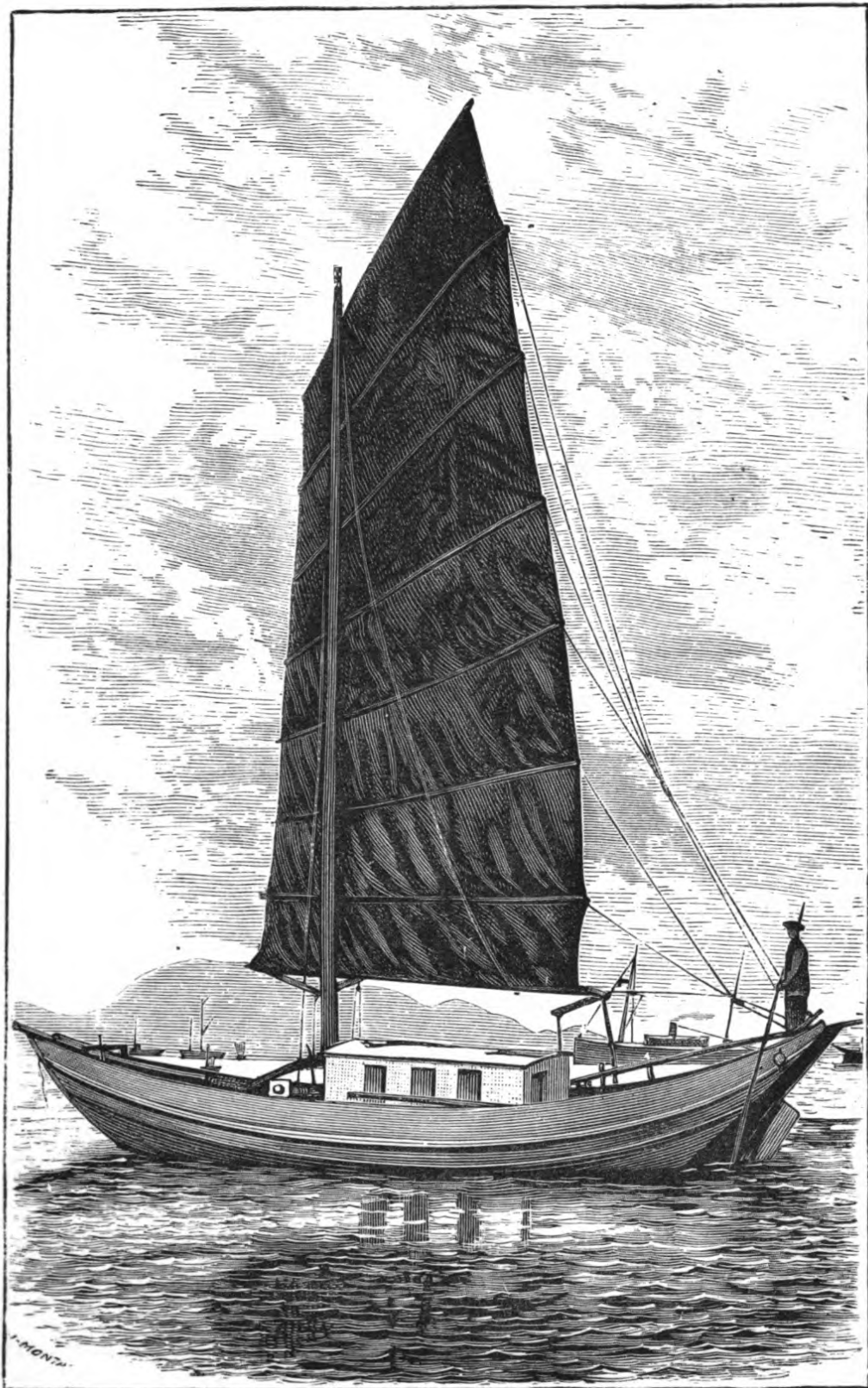
I am in a Chinese junk, going to Niuchuang to get your letters. I went on board on Saturday. The distance is only three hundred and sixty li, or one hundred and twenty miles. There is a fair wind to-day, and we may get there to-night if the wind keeps on. I am a little sea-sick, not much. I have not been sick, and can eat all right. We have had a hard journey. We started last Tuesday, nine days now, and had four days on foot over mountains and streams. The rain had destroyed the roads and flooded the rivers, so that we had to take bypaths and roundabouts. As soon as I get to Niuchuang I have to start back again. People said it would be an easier way than going by Peking. I don't think so. I hope to get your letters to-morrow, and hear how you got home. I hope you remember mama. I often think about her. Dear old mama, now going about the golden streets of heaven! Jesus is taking care of her.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Ch'ao Yang, Monday, October 18, 1886.

MY DEAR SONS JIMMIE AND WILLIE,

I send you a picture of my street tent with me in it. Mr. Shaw drew it, but if he had drawn the



CHINESE JUNK USED AS A MISSION-BOAT.

crowd of Chinamen and Mongols that usually surround it, you would not have been able to see me or anything else almost except the flying sign on which the Chinese characters are. The name of the tent is, 'The Gospel Hall of the Religion of Jesus.'¹

For the last three weeks here I have had a daily attendance of patients, say from forty to one hundred and ten. Many people bring their babies to me. We have good crowds round us to listen to our preaching. Two nights ago a lama in the inn here asked me not to preach against his religion. He said that it 'made people sweat to hear us speak so of Buddhism.' We preach of Christ as much as we can, and invite men to come to Him as their Saviour. Of course the lamas don't like to hear us preach. Some of them, though, are very friendly.

Last Monday we had a very pleasant incident. A Chinese farmer came up to our tent when almost no one else was there. I asked him to buy a book. He said he had the 'complete book.' It turned out that last July he had bought from us a Catechism and a New Testament, the Chinese name for which is 'The Complete Book of the New Testament.' He had taken them home to read them both through. We invited him to our inn to spend the evening. He came and slept with us. My Chinese helper and he talked away till about midnight. The farmer

¹ A picture of the tent is given at p. 135.

accepted our invitation to come and spend Sunday night with us. He came, and he and I talked till cockcrow on Monday. He knows the New Testament fairly well, and seems earnest. May he believe in Jesus and be saved.

Good-bye, my dear lads. Do what is right, and tell Jesus all your troubles. Pray for me here. I often pray for you, and look at your photographs. I wish I could see you.

Your papa,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Ping Fang Erh (Level Roofs), Tuesday, November 16, 1886.

MY DEAR SONS JIMMIE AND WILLIE,

I am well, and thankful for it. I am out on a journey for a few days. I had come to this place several times in summer and never got to a fair. It either blew or rained, and a few days ago, when here the last time, it snowed. To-day we marched thirty li, ten miles, and got here by breakfast-time. We had a good day at the fair, and, as I may have an opportunity of sending a mail in a day or two, I write to be ready.

I wrote you last from Ch'ao Yang three weeks ago. There is not much news. The best news I have is that I hope on Sunday to baptize two men (Chinamen—not Mongols). May God make them good, and keep them as Christians. I was at six fairs since I

wrote you, and doctored a great many people, and preached to a great many more. The guests in the inn are crowding round me, and I really cannot think of many things I wanted to say to you. One thing I do remember. I want you to learn the hymn in *Sacred Songs and Solos* (Sankey's), 416—

‘Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee ;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in endless praise.’

In learning this and other hymns, however, I do not want you to delay or neglect your lessons. Your lessons are the first thing. Do them as well as you can, and please Jesus and mama and me. Oh, my dear boys, I often think of you and pray for you, and I am so anxious that you should grow up good men, knowing and loving Jesus and speaking for Him to everybody. Perhaps some day you may come as medical missionaries to China. I wish it were so, but this is too far to look forward to. The right thing to do is to do your daily lessons as well as you can.

Good night, my boys.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

The other day we missed robbers by a very little way. In the morning we left the inn, and after a

little came up with two travellers who had slept in the same room with us. They started a little before us, and we came up with them reloading their donkeys after they had been plundered. God was very good to us in arranging that the robbers should miss us.

Your PAPA.

Mr. Gilmour returned to Peking on December 13, having been in Eastern Mongolia on this, his first campaign there, nearly eight months. In a report which he sent home he gives the following table of work done :—

Patients seen (about)	...	...	...	5,717
Hearers preached to	...	...	...	23,755
Books sold	...	...	...	3,067
Tracts distributed	...	...	...	4,500
Miles travelled	...	...	...	1,860
Money spent	...	...	...	£30 to £40

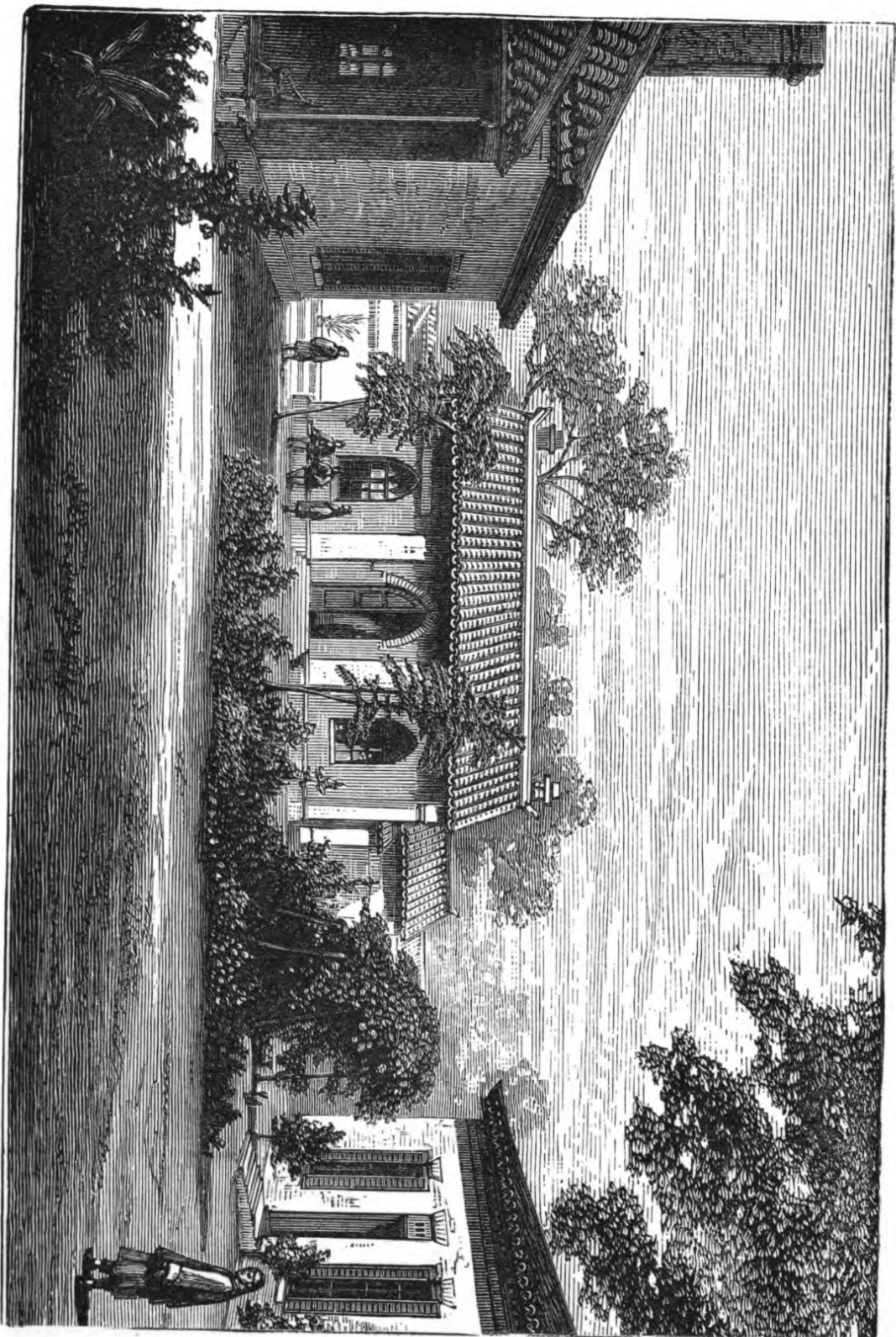
He goes on to say, 'And out of all this there are only two men who have openly confessed Christ. In one sense it is a small result; in another sense there is much to be grateful for.'

The next three letters are all written from Peking.

Peking, January 11, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS JAMES AND WILLIAM,

I am now at the West City for a few days as guest with Mr. Rees, who now lives in our old house.



LONDON MISSION COMPOUND, PEKING.
(THE CHAPEL IN THE CENTRE, MR. GILMOUR'S HOUSE TO THE LEFT.)



Alex can run about and speak well. He is a fine little fellow, and always wants me to toss him when he sees me. I went in to-night and saw him in his little bed as he was going to sleep. He had just had his bath, and looked so beautiful and sleepy. He is quite happy. He does not know anything about mama. He calls all foreign ladies his mama, and foreign men his papa; but the Chinese teach him to call me his *chen papa*, i.e. his true papa.

I am resting quietly here for a few days. I have all my books ready and my medicine packed, and am ready to start again for Mongolia in a few days. I shall try to write again, though, before I go.

Jesus has been very good to me lately. He comes nearer to me. I love Him more. God is very good to me. My heart has often been glad in trusting God. I pray much for you, my two dear sons. You know Jesus loves you. Oh, love Him. Tell Him all your things. When you are glad He is glad with you. When you are sad He is sad with you. He knows mama is dead and papa is far away, and you sometimes would like to see me. Jesus knows all about that. And He is sorry for you and for me. But Jesus has a beautiful home in a beautiful city, with streets of gold, where mama now is. Afterwards you two and Alex and I can all go there and live happily. But now, when you are at school, keep praying to Him every day to make you good, and to

help papa, and to make Alex good. In this way you will be happy every day, and I'll be happy, and Alex will be happy; and at last, when we die, we can all be happy together in heaven with mama and Jesus.

God bless you, my dear sons.

London Mission, Peking, January 21, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS JIMMIE AND WILLIE,

I am soon now going again to Mongolia, and want to write you before I go. I am well. I hope you got better all right.

The other night when I went out, Dr. Pritchard's cat got shut in my room, and tore a lot of my paper windows to get out. I had to paste them up with newspaper. The cat heard me, and came to the outside of the window, and kept poking her paw through the place I was pasting up. Funny old cat, wasn't she?

The Chinese new year is nearly here now. People are so busy buying lots of things. They are buying paper gods, too, to paste up in their houses. Pray for us, that we may be able to turn them to the true God and to Jesus.

All the children in Peking were at a Christmas-tree a few days ago, and got some nice presents.

You must not be surprised if you don't get any letters for a while after this. I may not have a way

to send them ; but be sure I'll write you a long letter with a lot of things in it, and send it by the first opportunity. Do not forget me. Pray for me. My dear sons, I pray for you much and often. May Jesus bless you! To-day, Miss Philip and Miss Smith are being examined in Chinese by Mr. Whiting and Mr. Sheffield. It is their second year's examination. Both of them speak Chinese well. I suppose you have forgotten your Chinese.

I would like to see you in school. Tell me about it and about the teachers. I am glad you have picture-books.

Now, my sons, tell all your things to Jesus. Tell your schoolmates about Jesus. Don't be friends with bad boys. Be friends with the boys who love Jesus.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Peking, January 22, 1887.

I send you two photographs.

One is of Mr. Brown as he was dressed when selling books in Mongolia. You know Mr. Brown. Perhaps he may be home this year. If so he'll perhaps go to see you.

The other photograph is of a lama and his scholar or disciple. You see the gods behind him. The lama is in praying fashion. Pray you that they may know to pray to Jesus.

It is now almost midnight, but I hear the Chinese chopping away at mincemeat, preparing to make *chu po pos*¹ for the new year.

It is now just about three o'clock on Saturday afternoon with you at home. I often think what hour it is in Scotland, and try to imagine what you may be doing in Hamilton.

Meantime good-bye, my dear sons. I have just been praying for you. Sometimes when I am writing a letter to you, and come to the foot of a page and want to turn over the leaf, I don't take blotting-paper and blot it, but kneel down and pray while it is drying.

Mr. Owen is here alone, and he and I have nice little talks sometimes after ten o'clock at night. But Mr. Owen is very busy, so we cannot talk much. I am going away, too, in a few days, then I'll have no one but Chinese to speak to. Never mind, I'll just tell Jesus all my affairs. I cannot go away from Him. He is never too busy to talk to me and listen to me. Just you, too, tell Jesus all your troubles. He sees both you and me.

Tuesday, January 25, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS JAMES AND WILLIAM,

I started to-day for Mongolia. It is the second day of the Chinese new year. The cart-wheels had little pieces of paper pasted on each spoke and

¹ A small, boiled turnover, containing chopped meat and vegetables,

on the end of the axle. There is one word (*Fu* = happiness) on each paper, and then a lot of cash cut out on it. A Chinaman's happiness, you know, is cash. They think in this way the year will be fortunate, and they'll make a lot of money.

Wednesday, January 26, 1887.

This morning we were only a few minutes out of the inn when the cart before us upset. No one was hurt. I have picked off a paper from the wheel to send to you. It is cut to represent nine cash.

Thursday, January 27, 1887.

To-day went over a high pass on a hill. Saw some carts loaded with grain going over. They have six mules each, but coming up the pass they clubbed together, and each cart had thirteen mules. Going down the other side two mules were hitched by the neck by ropes behind. A man went before hitting their noses, so they pulled back all they could. When two or three carts were safely over they went back for the rest.

It is now about ten a.m. with you. I suppose you are just gone to school. Blessings on you, my dear laddies.

Sunday, January 30, 1887.

In a very cold room at Jê Ho. Went out to the street and preached a little, and distributed tracts, but owing to the New Year's time there were very few people about.

Monday, January 31, 1887.

I may be able to send off this letter to-morrow. If the carter can get an exchange to-morrow, he'll send us on by a new carter, and go back home to Peking himself.

To-day met about fifty donkeys, all in a row, coming carrying bags of grain through a mountain-pass.

Tuesday, February 1, 1887.

Pray that the Chinese and Mongols may become Christians.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Wednesday, February 9, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS JAMES AND WILLIAM,

I am at Ta Ch'eng tzu. I got here on Friday. I found the two Christians (Chinese) all right, and we have had good times together, reading, singing, and praying. There are no others as yet who have come forward, but there are some thinking about it. Pray for them that they may decide for Christ.

It was cold coming here. A carter of another cart from mine was a young man, and so cold that he could not keep warm with walking, and sometimes jumped along and sometimes ran back and forward on the road to keep himself warm. We are in very poor quarters here, but manage to keep warm by burning charcoal. It is cold on the street. But we



CELEBRATING THE CHINESE NEW YEAR.

have good opportunities of meeting men, and that is the main thing. I wish I could see you sometimes and hear your voices, but that cannot be. Speak to Jesus and tell Him all your things. I always tell Him all my things, and it helps me. Letters are to be sent into Mongolia to me every three weeks (except in summer), so I hope to get letters from you from time to time.

Monday night, being the fifteenth of the first Chinese month, was a great night here. Don't you remember me in Peking taking you and Willie out to see the fireworks let down from a box hung high up on poles, when the crowd was so great that Willie and you had to sit on my shoulders? That was just one year ago. Last night I did not go out long, but I saw a beautiful tree with fruit, as it were, all fireworks, of course. Such a noise and beating of drums there was, to be sure.

Monday, February 14, 1887.

We are still here. I daily go to the street with my medicines and books and preach. Three men have said they want to be Christians, but they do not come to services, and are only half-hearted, I fear. I am praying all I can for them. I pray, too, for you. You are very precious to me. If you do not believe in Jesus, what shall I do? I want the heathen to believe. If my own sons do not pray to Jesus, oh, then I will be broken-hearted. But I trust you are His little disciples even now.

H

There is not much here that I can tell you to interest you. The other day I was drawing a man's tooth. I got hold of it, and he shouted, '*Don't, don't—won't do, won't do!*' but I pulled away steadily, and it was out in a twinkling, and the crowd roared all round with laughter. Last night again I pulled another man's tooth, pretty much with the same results.

I wish I could have some companion here in work. It is too lonely altogether, but it is a comfort to me to write a little to you now and again. It is like talking to you.

Cheer up, laddies, with your lessons ; we'll see each other some day yet.

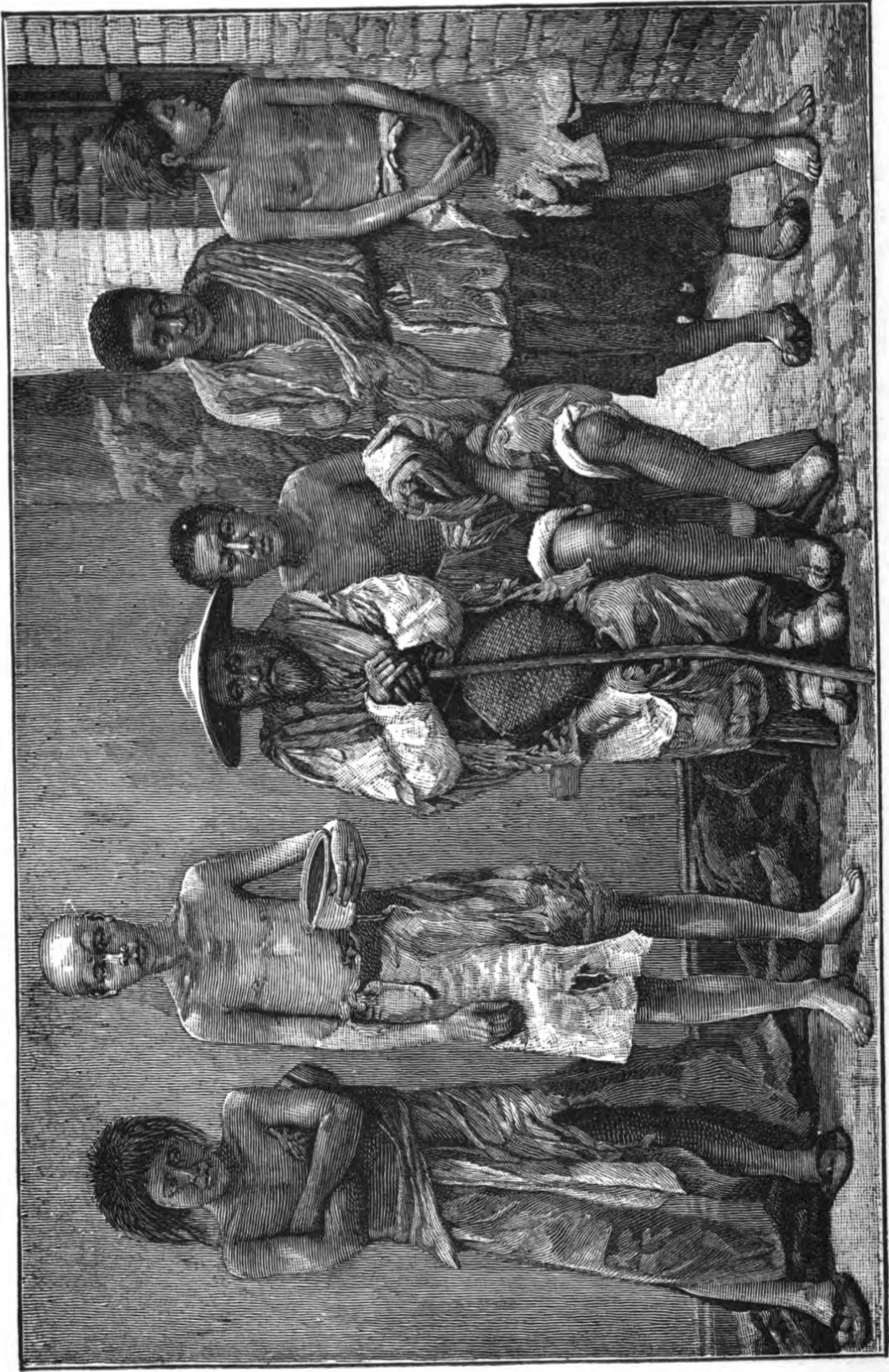
Friday, February 18, 1887.

Yesterday, coming home through a field from seeing a sick woman, I saw a pig standing with a magpie sitting pecking at its back. The pig was quite pleased, because the magpie was tickling it where it could not reach itself to scratch. Pigs here have a kind of brown wool at the bottom of their bristles ; the magpies peck this off to line their nests with. It is so cold that the pigs could not do without the wool.

Saturday, March 5, 1887.

It is now long since I heard from you. I am out on a tramp for the next two months or so, and there is an opportunity of sending off letters to-morrow by a friendly carter.

—



CHINESE BEGGARS.

Since the date above I have doctored many people, and preached a good deal, all in Ta Ch'eng tzu. I am now going a round, hoping to be back in Ta Ch'eng tzu in seventy-two days from now.

In Ta Ch'eng tzu there are the two Christians, and another man has given in his name. He was a whisky-drinker, and gave it up some two weeks ago. He has learned a good deal with us. If only he stands he may do, but I am afraid he may find that difficult.

I have no news more. I am very tired, and must stop.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

T'a Ssü Kow, March 7, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

Yesterday, when coming home to my inn, I saw three little beggar-boys playing on the street. One of them got the skin of a pumpkin and threw it at the other. It missed him, and slightly soiled the socks of a man who was passing. This man was so angry that he threw down the beggar-boy and stamped on his shoulders with his foot. The beggar-lad did not cry or say anything at all, and I came up and exhorted the man not to hurt him, as the beggar-lad had not meant to do any harm. Oh, it was so cruel of the man to knock the poor boy so. I was

sorry, very sorry, for him. To-day has been snowy, and we have been indoors most of the day. One man came and bought a New Testament and two other books, and a patient came with a bad hand. I met him yesterday and told him to poultice it. He had done so, and I gave him ointment. Another man came for his eyes. Some men came to talk, but we have had a day's rest. This is Monday. Wednesday we start away towards Ch'ao Yang. We have a donkey which carries our medicine boxes, our books and our baggage, but we walk. My Chinese shoes are new and hurt my feet; they are too small. To-day I met a man, a countryman, with a pair of shoes in his hand, and carrying a straw as the sign that they were for sale. I bargained for them, but he asked more than I offered. He wanted about eleven-pence for them. I hoped he would come after me with them, but he did not. I now wish I had bought them. They were quite new, and very strong-looking.

To-day I have been reading, and praying that God would convert some, many, of these people. Oh, it is so sad to see so many people and so few of them believe in Jesus. When they die, too, they must all know that all I say about Jesus is true; but they are not saved. At Ta Ch'eng tzu I have hired a room, a good large room, for which I pay £1 10s. a year. That is dear, but it could not be helped, as the rains ruined many houses last year. When I go

back in May I hope to see it nicely plastered up with clean fresh yellow mud, and not all black with smoke as it is now.

A mail from Peking was brought here a few days ago by a carter, but he could not find me, so took it away. He was to have left it in the inn. He is coming back, we think, in a day or two, so perhaps I may get it then. I suppose there are letters in that mail from you.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

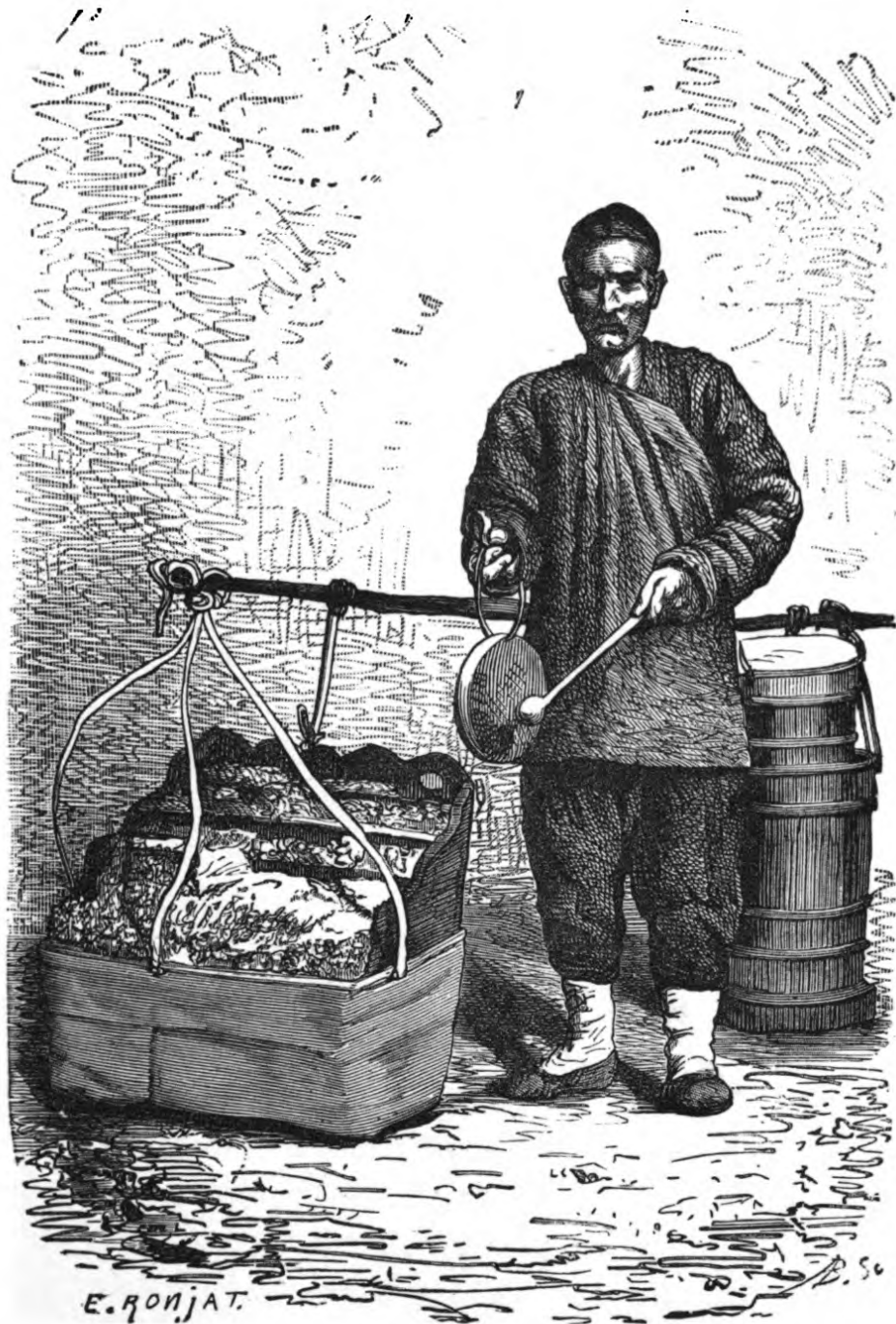
Ping Fang Erh, March 24, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

I was at a great fair the other day, and one of the attractions for children was a peep-show which they could look in at by paying one cash. I was quite startled when I saw it first. I saw a great crowd standing round a steamboat. There were two masts with a red flag flying from the fore-mast, a great funnel, and a foreigner sitting aloft on the cross-trees of the hind-mast. This foreigner was bareheaded, white-haired, white-bearded, and with a very broad grin on his face. I went up, and the showman called out to the man up aloft, 'Captain, where has the ship got to?' The man aloft raised his telescope to his eye, looked a little, then put it down, moved his mouth, and a voice said, 'May Li Ying Tsü' (the

name of the village). I could not help laughing. The foreigner was sitting cross-legged, and the wind blowing made the flag flutter just as if the steamer were going. The little Chinese boys were crowding round to pay their cash and look in at the pictures. When the showman pulled a string, the 'captain,' as he called the man at the mast-head, put his spy-glass to his eye, then put it down and moved his mouth. It was very good.

May Li Ying Tsū is a very wicked place. There were no less than fourteen large tents set up for gambling, and in addition some thirty or forty mat tents for gambling. I was there three days. The first day people were shy. The second day they were not much afraid. The third day I had quite a lot of patients. We sold a good few books, preached a good deal, and doctored a number of patients. From there we went to Bo-or-Ch'ih, starting in the dark and travelling seventeen English miles before breakfast. After we had travelled ten miles we came to a little town just as people were opening their doors. A seller of *ch'eh kao*, that sticky stuff, had just set out his wheelbarrow with his pudding. We each bought a great piece, wrapped it in a *chien ping* (a thin scone), and travelled on eating it. That was our breakfast. Arrived at Bo-or-Ch'ih, we set up our table at once, and after preaching for a short time patients came round us in crowds, and kept us



A CHINESE SWEETMEAT-SELLER.



busy till late in the afternoon. There is a great difference in places. Bo-or-Ch'ih is a very small place, but all the country people there seem to trust me and believe in me. I am very glad of this, for I hope thus to win their hearts for Jesus. After we had gone to our inn a Mongol came and asked me to go and see his mother. I went next morning. She is a woman who was supposed to be dying last April, but had some medicine from me, and under God's blessing recovered. I left her some more medicine. To-day I am quiet in an inn waiting for a fair tomorrow, and I am praying much for God's blessing on my work here. I don't care how hard the work may be, if **God would only bless me in it.** He has given me great acceptance among the people as a doctor, but I want to see men saved. Christianity seems all so strange to them, and they are afraid of the persecution they would have to bear if they became Christians. They would have to bear a lot of it at Ta Ch'eng tzu. There are some people who are only afraid of persecution, that keeps them back from Christ. Pray, my sons, that the Chinese and Mongols may not fear persecution so much as fear not going to heaven. I hope that by-and-by there may be many Christians in this region. It is very degraded with gambling, opium-smoking, and whisky-drinking.

The inn in which I am staying now is owned by two men, brothers, both of whom are opium-smokers.

The inn has a good trade, but it is all no use ; it all goes to opium, and no good comes of it. There are two barbers connected with the place, and they both drink and gamble, so that they are in rags and poverty, though they have a fairly good business. It is so painful to see men degraded thus, when but for drink and gambling they might be well off.

Ch'ao Yang, April 10, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

I am getting on well. I have had terrible weather lately, though. Daily I have my tent ; it is only a cloth roof on six bamboo poles, put up in the market-place. We have had three days' wind. Eh, man, the first day the dust was terrible. But I had lots of patients, and remained out all day. At last we had to take down our tent. It could not stand. The tent was carried to the inn, but we remained with our table till evening. You would hardly have known us for dust. But patients came all the time. Next day the tent was blown down twice. Once a man's head got such a smack with the bamboo tent-pole ; but he said nothing, and took it quite pleasantly. A peep-show man near us got his show blown down and scattered about. He gathered it up and went home to his inn.

I am so glad that the people like us and trust us, and come about us for medicines. Women came too.

Boys came too. Just now the schoolboys have holidays for the fair, and they stand for a long time together looking at me doctoring the people. What the boys like to see is a glass bottle of eye-medicine which I bring out and set up. Then I dip a glass tube in and press an indiarubber bulb. The air comes out in the water in bubbles, and rises up to the surface, and the boys are so delighted to see it bubbling. They will wait a long time, and like to see it ever so often. They are sometimes troublesome, then I send them away. When they are good, I shove the glass tube deep down into the bottle, and they are so delighted to see the air bubbling up from the bottom.

When a man comes to have a tooth pulled, even the men are delighted, and advise him to have it out. They want to see the fun. Mothers send their little boys for medicine, and I am so pleased with some of the little lads. They are so modest and so polite, making a deep bow as they go away. Always be modest and polite, my sons, and people will love you and treat you well.

The boys buy a lot of books, too, and I preach to them earnestly, because in ten years to come they will be men, and if they know about Jesus now, they may more easily become Christians some day soon. You, Jimmie, know Jesus; does Willie? Teach him. Mama is not here to teach him, and

I am far away. You are his big brother. Teach you him, like a good laddie as you are.

The other day when I was preaching, a man was standing behind me with a little black pig under his arm. He wanted to hear me preach, but the pig would not be quiet. He held its mouth shut, but the little pig would still manage to give a squeak now and again. At last it would not be quiet at all, and he had to go away with it. I could not help smiling at him.

There is an old man here in my inn. He is owner of the inn. His son manages the inn. The old man is not very old. He is about sixty-five. But he used to be a great opium-smoker. A year or more ago he had a very serious illness, and gave up his opium, but he had wrecked his health by his smoking. He cannot now live many months. He can hardly speak plainly now. He comes to see me in my room, and I try to tell him about Jesus, hoping that he may be saved. He listens, but he is not very bright in his mind. I hope he may pray to Jesus.

The other day I had to pull my own tooth. It was the back tooth, and had been painful for days. There was no one who could do it for me, so I sat down with a little Chinese looking-glass before a candle, got a good hold of it with the forceps, and, after a good deal of wrenching, out it came. He *was* a deep-pronged fellow, and he did bleed. I was so thankful that God helped me to get it out. I can sleep now all right.

Our Mongol donkey-man wants to be a Christian. I hope he is sincere, but he is very slow and dull at learning. There are three other men here who are learning about Jesus too, but it is too early yet to say much about them. A good many people learn some, then stop. But it is late, and I must go to bed, else I won't be able to preach and doctor all day in the market-place at the fair to-morrow.

Praying that God may bless you, my sons, and sending you much love,

I am your affectionate father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Very soon after his boys had left him Mr. Gilmour began to write letters to them in large capitals, so that they might be able to spell them out for themselves. Sometimes he used lead pencil, sometimes ink, sometimes the brush which the Chinese always use. They really paint their letters. Several of these letters are given in this book, so that you may read them exactly as they were written, showing even the little slips which almost every one makes who begins to write in this way to children. The letter given on the next page was written in pencil, that on pp. 190 to 192 with a Chinese brush, and the very beautiful one on pp. 151 to 154 in ink.

APRIL 28 1887

MY DEAR SON JAMES

EVERY DAY TELL
JESUS ALL YOUR THINGS, AND HE
WILL MAKE YOUR HEART GLAD. IF YOU
ARE BUSY TAKE TIME TO SAY YOUR
PRAYERS. PRAY FOR ME. I PRAY FOR
YOU. PRAY FOR ALEC. MANY PEOPLE
HERE IN CHINA THINK OF YOU AND
PRAY FOR YOU. HOW ARE ^{YOU} GETTING
ON AT SCHOOL? I LONG FOR YOU
TO BE ABLE TO WRITE, THAT I
MAY GET LETTERS FROM YOU. NEVER
MIND THOUGH YOU MAKE MISTAKES IN
YOUR LETTERS TO ME. I WILL NOT
LAUGH. I WANT SO MUCH TO GET
LETTERS FROM YOU. MY SON I LOVE
YOU. HOW IS WILLIE? TELL ME

ABOUT HIM MY MONGOL
DONKEY MAN WANTS TO BE A
CHRISTIAN BUT HE LEARNS SO
VERY SLOWLY HIS FRIENDS TOO
WILL BE VERY ANGRY IF HE IS
A CHRISTIAN I WISH THAT YOU
AND WILLIE WERE GROWN UP AND
HAD LEARNED TO BE DOCTORS. THEN
YOU COULD COME OUT ~~AND~~ AND
HELP TO TEACH THE PEOPLE HERE
ABOUT CHRIST. MAY GOD
BLESS YOU MY DEAR SON
YOUR LOVING FATHER
JAMES GILMOOR

April 28, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

I am rained in at a roadside inn, and have
time to write you a few lines.

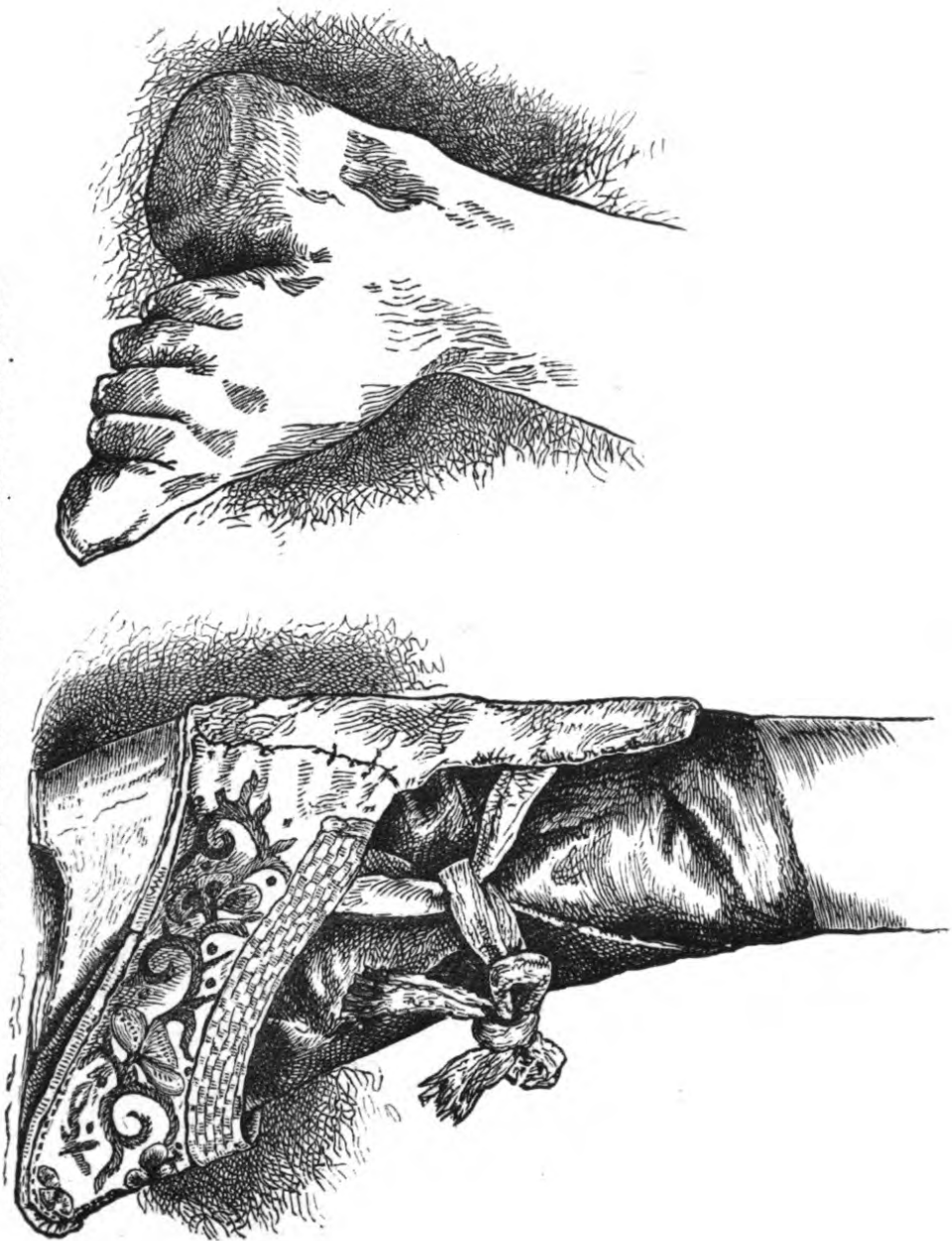
I am well, and thankful for it. For the last week I have been very busy at a great temple-gathering, which lasted six days. Such crowds of people came, though it was only a country district. It was the

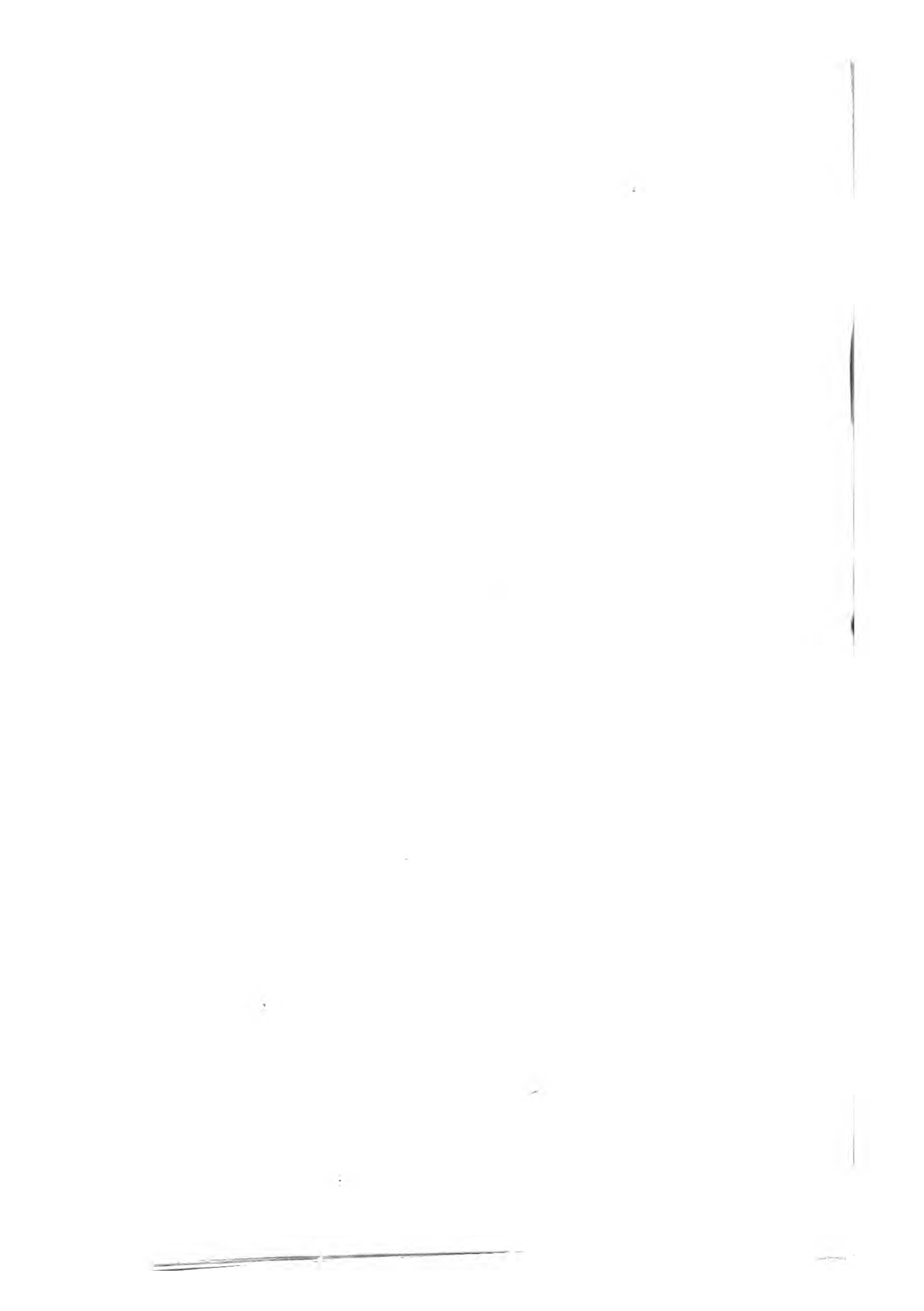


CHINESE WOMAN, WITH LITTLE FEET.

great religious event of the year for the neighbourhood, and how do you think they do? They hire a theatrical company to come and act six days in a great mat stage, put up for the occasion in front of

THE DEFORMED FEET OF A CHINESE WOMAN.





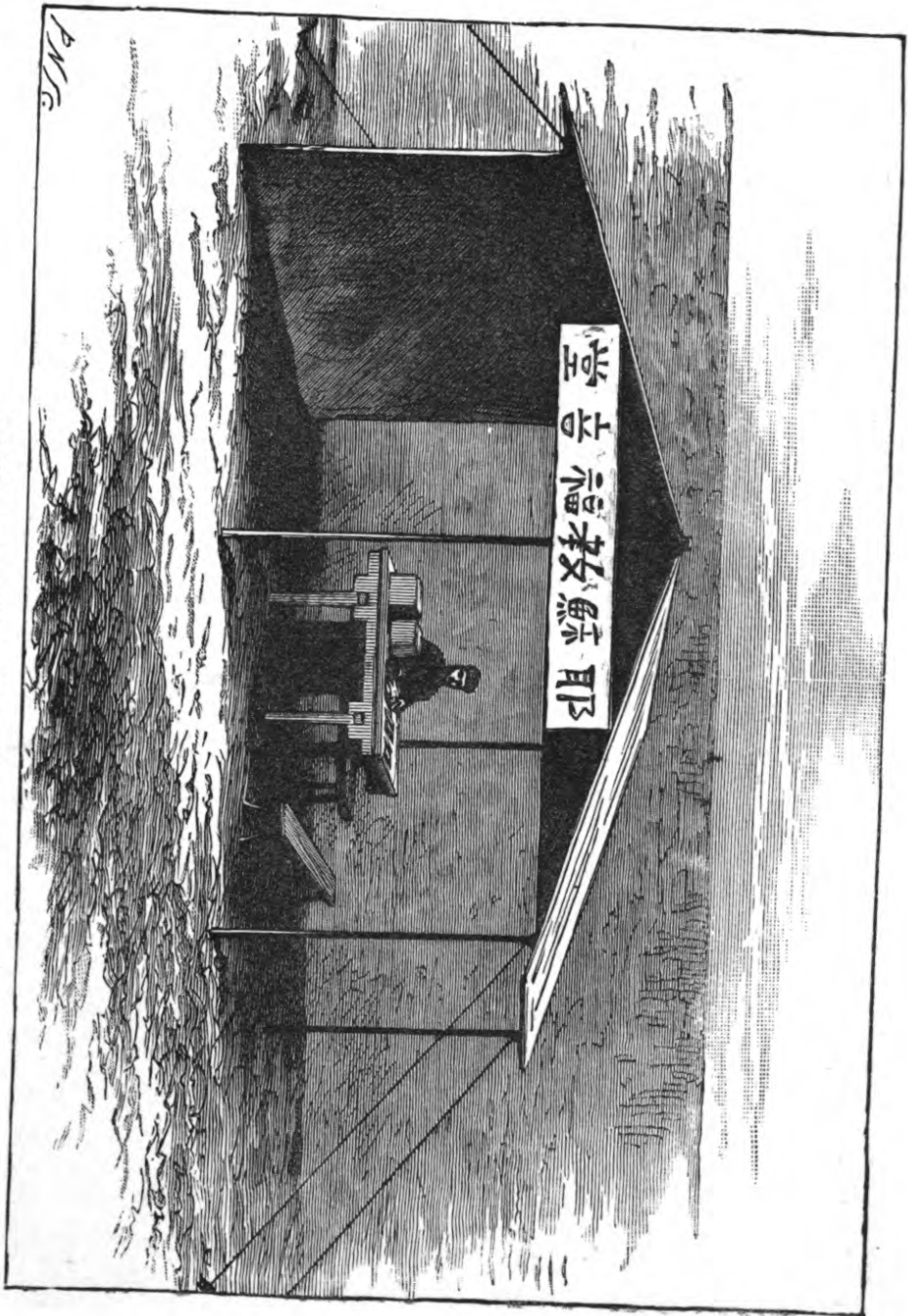
the temple. Theatrical exhibitions are the religion of China. These shows are supposed to be in honour of the idols in the temple. The people think the gods will thus be pleased, and give them good seasons, health, etc.

What a crowd of women came to worship at the temple on the great day of the festival! Till noon of that day women only were allowed to enter, no men. How the women were dressed—in all the colours of the rainbow, red trousers being especially prominent! How they moved along on their little feet! Walk you along only on your heels—as I have seen you do—and that is just how they move.

I was on a journey, and happened, without planning it, on this temple; so I took the opportunity to stop and preach and doctor the people. It is so sad to see the people given up to idol-worship, and to see how shallow their worship is—simply burning some incense and paper figures, then off to see the theatre, then round to the stalls to buy things. Traders come from all quarters to sell, and they drive a brisk trade. Everything, nearly, is for sale; in fact, the people look forward to the annual 'temple,' as they call it, for buying things cheap. No end of gamblers came, too. There were twenty-six, or so, large tents put up to gamble in, and about as many straw-mat booths, and they all had plenty of trade. Eh, man, it is sad to see the utter worldliness of these Chinese.

They soon found me out. I had my tent put up in a quiet place away from the bustle. In front is the great flying sign, 'The Jesus Religion Gospel Hall.' At the one end, 'God the Heavenly Father;' at the other, 'Jesus the Saviour.' They found me out, not because they wanted to hear me preach, but to get medicine. Oh the numbers of suffering people I saw and attended to! I used to go out early in the morning and be there all day, most of the time so busy that there was no time to eat. To get food I had to steal away, because every one would want me just to attend to him or her before I went. When I had attended to that one, there was another, and so on. I was able to cure a number of them, and got preaching a good deal too. I sold a number of books. It was the first time that a missionary had ever been there, and it was difficult to make them understand, and I think they are a peculiarly degraded people just there. One old man, a school teacher, was interested and intelligent, and got a Catechism and a New Testament, and a small book of prayers. He *said* he would read, and pray.

Another man was very intelligent. He bought four little books, but brought them back in a day or two, saying they had a smell of medicine, which troubled his nose and stuck to his hands all night! The truth was, in his case, some one had frightened him, for the books he had were printed from blocks,



JAMES GILMOUR AND HIS TENT.

like all Chinese books, and not from movable type, as our Gospels and Testaments are. These last have a medicinal smell arising from the ink, which is not the same as the Chinese printers use.

In the inn, which was not a proper inn, but a blacksmith's shop, some one stole our money, in all about three shillings, and our door-curtain with the sign on it. The last morning, too, when my back was turned, as I was doctoring a patient's foot, some one stole a little bundle of books from our table. We were not the only ones robbed. A beggar, who was sleeping outside at the fair, had a pair of trousers stolen; and the last day, too, the mat shed, put up for the gods to see the play from, took fire, but was soon put out. I am very thankful for one thing—the great mass of the people trust me, and seem to respect me. That is what I want to begin with, their love and esteem; then I want them to be thus led to love and trust Christ. Pray for them, my sons. I hope that some day the Chinese will worship God in spirit and in truth.

This letter will be read to you. I am going to print another letter—two, one to each of you, so that you may be able to read it for yourselves.

The last sentence refers to the fact that the boys were now getting old enough to read their father's letters if he 'printed' them in large capitals.

MAY 8TH 1887

MY DEAR SON WILLIE

ARE YOU WELL?
TO DAY WE HAVE A ROOM TO OUR-
SELVES, AND IT ~~HAS~~ HAS RAINED SO
I CAN WRITE TO YOU I AM TELLING
THE PEOPLE HERE ABOUT JESUS I
WISH THEY WOULD BELIEVE. YOU
KNOW ALL ABOUT JESUS. SPEAK TO
HIM AND HE WILL BE GLAD. I OFTEN
WISH I COULD SEE YOUR DEAR LITTLE
FACE AND SPEAK TO YOU. I MAY
COME HOME SOME DAY AND THEN
WE CAN GO WALKS TOGETHER AS
WE USED TO DO ~~WE~~ WHEN ~~MAMA~~
MAMA WAS HERE. THAT WILL BE
NICE. ALWAYS TELL ALL YOUR THINGS
TO JESUS. HE LIKES TO HEAR YOU.

HE WILL KEEP YOU
SAFE HE IS MY JESUS
AND HE IS YOURS AND
WILLIES AND ALECS AND
MAMA IS WITH HIM UP IN
HEAVEN.
YOUR LOVING

FATHER
JAMES GILMOUR

May 10, 1887.

In the inn here there is a hen with nine little chickens. I think there are nine ; they are very difficult to count, they run about and mix themselves up so. I notice that the old hen brings them home early in the afternoon, and goes with them into a place where people's feet cannot disturb them. They are so pretty, too. One little one looked out from under his mother's feathers so prettily the other evening till he got sleepy, then he went inside. Her

feathers seemed so soft and warm and covering. The mother is so fierce when any other hen comes near them to pick up food. She simply rushes at the other hen, and it has to go off flying in terror. The old hen actually attacked two little pigs because they would come about her chickens. She is so intelligent, too. When I was feeding her and her chickens in our room the two pigs came in. A Chinaman scared them off, and the hen seemed to know he was not chasing her. She stood still, looking so pleased. The chickens understand her calls perfectly. When she finds food she utters one kind of call, and they all run to eat. When there is danger she utters another call, and they all run for shelter.

God is to us like a hen to her chickens. He wants to provide for us, to protect us in danger, to love us and shelter us. He keeps calling to us from time to time. There are times when the hen cannot protect her chickens, but God can always protect us. Boys, the only danger in the world is in not listening to God's calls. Every time I saw the hen call, her chickens ran towards her. If they had not come she would have been distressed. God loves us. If we do not go to Him when He calls, He must be distressed. Jesus said of those who in the old time disobeyed God, 'How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!'

MAY 16 1887

MY DEAR SON JAMES

THE OTHER DAY
WHEN ON THE ROAD - I SAW
SOME SHEEP FEEDING THE
SHEPHERD CALLED THEM AND
THEY ALL RAN TO HIM
LEAVING THE NICE GREEN GRASS
THEY KNEW HIS VOICE

JESUS IS OUR SHEPHERD
WHEN HE CALLS WE SHOULD
GO TO HIM THE SHEEP
FA FEAR THE WOLF. THE
DEVIL IS LIKE A WOLF HE
WANTS TO HURT US. GO
TO JESUS AND PRAY AND.

SPEAK TO HIM PRAYING, YOU KNOW,
IS JUST SPEAKING TO JESUS. HE IS
ALWAYS NEAR AND IS NEVER TOO
BUSY TO HEAR YOU MAMA SEES
HIM EVERY DAY ~~AND~~ GOES
ABOUT HIS BEAUTIFUL CITY SO
HAPPY AND GLAD. SHE IS WAITING
TO SEE YOU AND JIMMIE AND LITTLE
ALEC AND ME ALL COME TO
THAT BEAUTIFUL CITY BUILT ABOVE
DO YOUR LESSONS WELL AND JESUS
AND MAMA AND I WILL ALL BE GLAD
TELL GRANDPA IF HE GOES TO HEAVEN
FIRST TO TAKE OUR LOVE TO MAMA
AND TELL HER THAT WE ARE ALL COMING
BY AND BY YOUR LOVING FATHER
JAMES GILMOUR

MAY 28 1887

MY DEAR SON

WILLIE

IN A VILAGE
I SAW ALL THE SCHOOL
BOYS UP ON THE ROOF
OF THE SCHOOL. IT WAS
A MUD ROOF. IT HAD
RAINED THE DAY BEFORE
AND THE MASTER HAD
SENT THEM UP THERE
TO TREAD THE MOIST
EARTH FIRM, SO THAT
IT MIGHT NOT LEAK

SPEAK TO HIM PRAYING, YOU KNOW,
IS JUST SPEAKING TO JESUS. HE IS
ALWAYS NEAR AND IS NEVER TOO
BUSY TO HEAR YOU MAMA SEES
HIM EVERY DAY ~~AND~~ GOES
ABOUT HIS BEAUTIFUL CITY SO
HAPPY AND GLAD. SHE IS WAITING
TO SEE YOU AND JIMMIE AND LITTLE
ALEC AND ME ALL COME TO
THAT BEAUTIFUL CITY BUILT ABOVE
DO YOUR LESSONS WELL AND JESUS
AND MAMA AND I WILL ALL BE GLAD
TELL GRANDPA IF HE GOES TO HEAVEN
FIRST TO TAKE OUR LOVE TO MAMA
AND TELL HER THAT WE ARE ALL COMING
BY AND BY YOUR LOVING FATHER
JAMES GILMOUR

MAY 28 1884

MY DEAR SON

WILLIE

IN A VILAGE
I SAW ALL THE SCHOOL
BOYS UP ON THE ROOF
OF THE SCHOOL. IT WAS
A MUD ROOF. IT HAD
RAINED THE DAY BEFORE
AND THE MASTER HAD
SENT THEM UP THERE
TO TREAD THE MOIST
EARTH FIRM, SO THAT
IT MIGHT NOT LEAK

THE NEXT TIME IT
RAINED THE BOYS
SEEMED TO ENJOY IT.
IT WAS FUN. THEY
DID NOT DO THEIR
LESSONS JUST
THEN

J WISH I
COULD SEE YOU FOR A
LITTLE WHILE. I AM
LOOKING AT YOUR
PHOTO I WONDER
WHEN YOUR NEW
PHOTO IS COMING

JESUS LOVES YOU MY
DEAR WILLIE. LOVE
JESUS AND HE WILL
BE GLAD.

I TELL
THE PEOPLE HERE
ABOUT JESUS, BUT
THEY DO NOT LOVE
HIM. I AM SO SORRY
THAT THEY DO NOT
LOVE HIM. JESUS
IS SORRY TOO.

HOW SORRY I WOULD
BE IF YOU DID NOT
LOVE HIM. LOVE

HIM WILLIE AND
PRAY THAT THE
CHINESE HERE MAY
LOVE HIM TOO
AND THAT WILL BE
HELPING PAPA.

YOUR LOVING FATHER
JAMES GILMOUR

May 29, 1887.

MY DEAR SON JAMES,

I so often think about you and pray for you.
I am lonely here, and the people will not love Jesus.
I wish so much that they would. If they would love
Jesus, I would be happy. I have got no letters from

you for more than six months, and I long much to hear how you are. I trust that you are happy. Sometimes you are lonely. Then go and tell Jesus all about it, and He will make you glad.

My dear Jimmie, I often think of the happy times we had together when mama was with us. You cannot forget her. Keep loving Jesus, and some day we will be all together again in heaven. Kisses to you and Willie.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, June 22, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

I saw a funny thing yesterday in the court of the inn here, and write to tell you. It was a little donkey with a cloth over its eyes, and tied to a long *kao liang* (millet) stalk, the other end of which was fixed to an iron pin driven into the ground. The poor little donkey kept limping round this circle. Being blinded, he could not see when people were looking at him, and so he dared not stop. By a string an old shoe with a stone in it was tied to his tail, and he had to keep dragging this round and round. I asked why. They said he had sprained his foot, and this was to heal him. He looked so funny limping away. I hope he'll soon be better.

Coming here our cart got upset. It did not go

right over, though, but just stood halfway over. We were in a deep narrow road, and the end of the long wooden axle was resting on the ground. We got out as soon as we could and tilted the cart right again.

Mongolia, June 22, 1887.

Another bit of fun. A guest staying with us one night put his wet shoes into the fireplace to dry. No one knew he had done so. In the morning the fire was lit, and after a while the guest awoke and wanted his shoes. They were dragged out half consumed and useless, and set down on the ground before him, smoking at a great rate. As he was a poor man I found him another pair, so that for him the accident was a happy one.

J. G.

Ta Ch'eng tzu, September 3, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

I am well, and thankful for it. The three Christians here come daily to evening worship. There are here others who want to be Christians, but who have not courage enough. One man's wife won't let him be a Christian ; she says she will kill herself if he does. Another man is in the same case. He is a Chinaman, his wife is a Mongol. Still another man has a Mongol wife, and she kept him back. The other day he came and confessed Christianity.

His wife does not consent—only says, 'We'll see.' Another man's father hinders his son from Christianity. The lad is a very nice lad.

Yesterday was the day when people make offerings of food and fruit at the graves. One of the Christians was sent to do so. He brought the melon here, and we ate half of it with him.

Still another man is forbidden by his father to be a Christian. That is in all five men are Christians at heart, and read our books and are learning Christianity, but do not confess Christ, in this one place. Do you know what Jesus says about such people (Matt. x. 32-39)? Jesus says that if they obey others rather than Him they are not worthy to be His disciples. I am praying for all these people. I ask you, too, to pray for these and all like them, that they may be able to confess Christ. It is difficult for men in China to be Christians. How different with you! We all want you to be Christians. Your father and friends all help you to be Christians, and if you are not Christians we are all distressed. Boys, do be true to Jesus. In your words and deeds honour Him. Make *His* heart glad. Jesus wants your love. He loves you, and died for you. You cannot but love Him, if you think how He loves you. Good-bye, meantime. I am just going to breakfast, and then for a day on the street trying to tell the people about Jesus. God bless you, my dear lads.

It is now afternoon. I write a few lines. A lad in a shop here has a tame dove. He has painted it all over different colours. It looks absurd. I don't like to see it sitting about the shop. Doves look so happy flying about. Mama, too, liked to see birds on the trees and houses wild, not kept in cages.

I guess you are just about getting your breakfast. Here it is about four p.m. With you it should be eight a.m.

Saturday.

I wish I could see you. My love to you, my dear sons. May you always, both now and when grown, be boys and men that know and love Jesus. I pray for you.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

The next letter, which we give in facsimile, so that the reader can look upon it exactly as it was written, needs no words of explanation. It is, perhaps, the most characteristic in the whole series. Mr. Gilmour had just returned for a brief season of refreshment among friends at Peking, and also to secure fresh supplies of medicines and other necessities for his work.

PEKING DEC. 16. 1947

MY DEAR SONS

JIMMIE AND WILLIE

I AM WELL
AND THANKFUL FOR IT. I HAVE A VERY
SAD DUTY TO PERFORM. IT IS TO
TELL YOU THAT YOUR LITTLE BROTHER
ALEXANDER DIED THIS MORNING AT
TEN O'CLOCK. THE DEAR LITTLE LAD
HAD BEEN ILL A WEEK OR MORE. AT
FIRST HE WAS NOT THOUGHT TO BE VERY
ILL. LATER IT WAS SEEN THAT HIS
HEAD WAS AFFECTED. THAT WAS
MORE SERIOUS. I HAD JUST GONE TO
TIEN-TSIN AND WAS SENT FOR. I
LEFT TIEN-TSIN ON MONDAY MORNING
AT TWO O'CLOCK A.M. AND REACHED
PEKING TUESDAY EVENING AT DARK.
ALICK DID NOT KNOW ME. HE
LINGERED ON TILL THIS MORNING,
FRIDAY, AT 10 O'CLOCK. HE DID NOT
SUFFER MUCH MOST OF THE TIME,
AND EVEN WHEN HE SEEMED TO SUFFER

I DONT THINK HE WAS VERY CON-
SCIOUS. THE FUNERAL IS TO BE ON
MONDAY HIS LITTLE COFFIN IS TO BE
PLACED NEXT TO MAMAS.

POOR DEAR WEE ALICK
HE NEVER WAS VERY WELL SINCE
MAMA DIED. HIS BACK BONE-
HIS SPINE- BEGAN TO CURVE
SOME MONTHS AGO.

NOW MY DEAR
SONS, HIS BROTHERS, DONT BE TOO
SORRY ABOUT HIM. HE HAS GONE
TO MAMA, AND TO GRAND MAMA
AND TO JESUS, IN THAT CITY
OF BEAUTY WHERE NO ONE IS
EVER SICK AND WHERE ALL IS
BEAUTIFUL. THERE ARE LOTS OF
LITTLE GIRLS AND BOYS PLAYING
ALL ABOUT, AND NO BAD BOYS
OR BAD PEOPLE TO ANNOY HIM OR
TEACH HIM EVIL. AND WOULD
NOT MAMA RECEIVE HIM INTO HER
LAYING ARMS JUST AS SHE

USED TO HOLD YOU AND HIM
WE WHEN SHE WAS HERE. DEAR
DEAR OLD PRETTY MAMA, DEAR
DEAR WEE ALICK. I THINK I SEE
HER HUGGING HIM, AND HIM
NESTLING ON HER BOSOM JUST
WHEN HE ARRIVED

THEY ARE FOR
EVER WITH THE LORD. JESUS
LIKES TO SEE THEM. THEY
LIKE TO SEE JESUS. THE ANGELS
AS THEY PASS STOP TO LOOK
AT THEM AND SAY "YOUR SON?"
THE ANGELS SAY "HAS HE ANY
BROTHERS AND SISTERS?" MAMA
SAYS "TWO BROTHERS AT SCHOOL
IN HAMILTON SCOTLAND"
THE ANGELS SAY "PAPA?" MAMA SAYS
"PAPA IS A MISSIONARY IN CHINA"
THE ANGELS SAY "THE BROTHERS
AND PAPA WILL ALL COME SOME
DAY IF THEY BELONG TO JESUS"

MAMA SAYS 'WONT THAT BE NICE'
NOW BOYS BE SURE YOU BELONG TO
JESUS AND YOU ARE ALL RIGHT.
TELL JESUS YOU ARE GLAD HE IS
TAKING SUCH CARE OF MAMA
AND ALICK. ASK HIM TO TAKE
CARE OF YOU, AND TO TAKE
CARE OF ME, AND SOME DAY
WE'LL ALL BE THERE TOGETHER.
MEAN TIME LET US BE VERY CARE-
FUL TO DO AND SAY JUST
WHAT JESUS LIKES.

I DONT KNOW WHO
WILL GO FIRST. PERHAPS GRAND-
PA. WONT THEY ALL BE GLAD TO
SEE HIM AND WONT THEY ALL
GIVE HIM A GOOD WELCOME. I KNOW
GRAND-PA WANTS JESUS TO SAVE
HIM AND I KNOW JESUS WANTS
TO SAVE HIM. MEAN TIME
GOOD BYE MY SONS. ASK JESUS
TO KEEP YOU. DONT SORROW
OVER ALICK. HE IS WITH JESUS
YOUR LOVING PAPA.

Tientsin, December 29, 1887.

MY DEAR SONS,

I came here yesterday. On the road I saw men going to hawk. There were four of them. Each had a hawk sitting on his wrist. As I passed the hawks were making a whistling noise. A boy had a black dog. He was leading it with a strap. There was a crowd of boys with them. They were going to catch hares. When they see a hare they let go the hawk, and he flies away and swoops down on the hare, clutching it with his talons. Then, I suppose, the dog comes up and helps. Then the men come. I think it all very cruel sport. The poor hare runs so frightened. Poor creature! It is no sport to it. Hares are so pretty. Why so should men want to kill them?

Near Tientsin I saw a much prettier sight. An old grandfather was out helping his two little grandsons, not so big as you, to fly a kite. The grandfather seemed as pleased as the boys. That I thought was very pretty.

I hope you, my two sons, will learn to be kind to animals. Remember they love life as well as you do. Why should people make sport by shooting and killing them? Do you remember how kind mama used to be to animals? God likes us to be kind to them. They are all His animals.

Tientsin, Saturday, January 7, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I have had a very pleasant week here.

In the morning at nine we have a Bible-reading and prayer-meeting. At one o'clock I mostly go out somewhere to tiffin, as they here call the midday meal ; at four o'clock Drs. Mackenzie and Roberts and I, and any one else who will come, go out and walk ; at five we have another Bible-reading and prayer-meeting ; then at 8 p.m. is the daily prayer-meeting, which is held every evening, it being now the week of prayer.

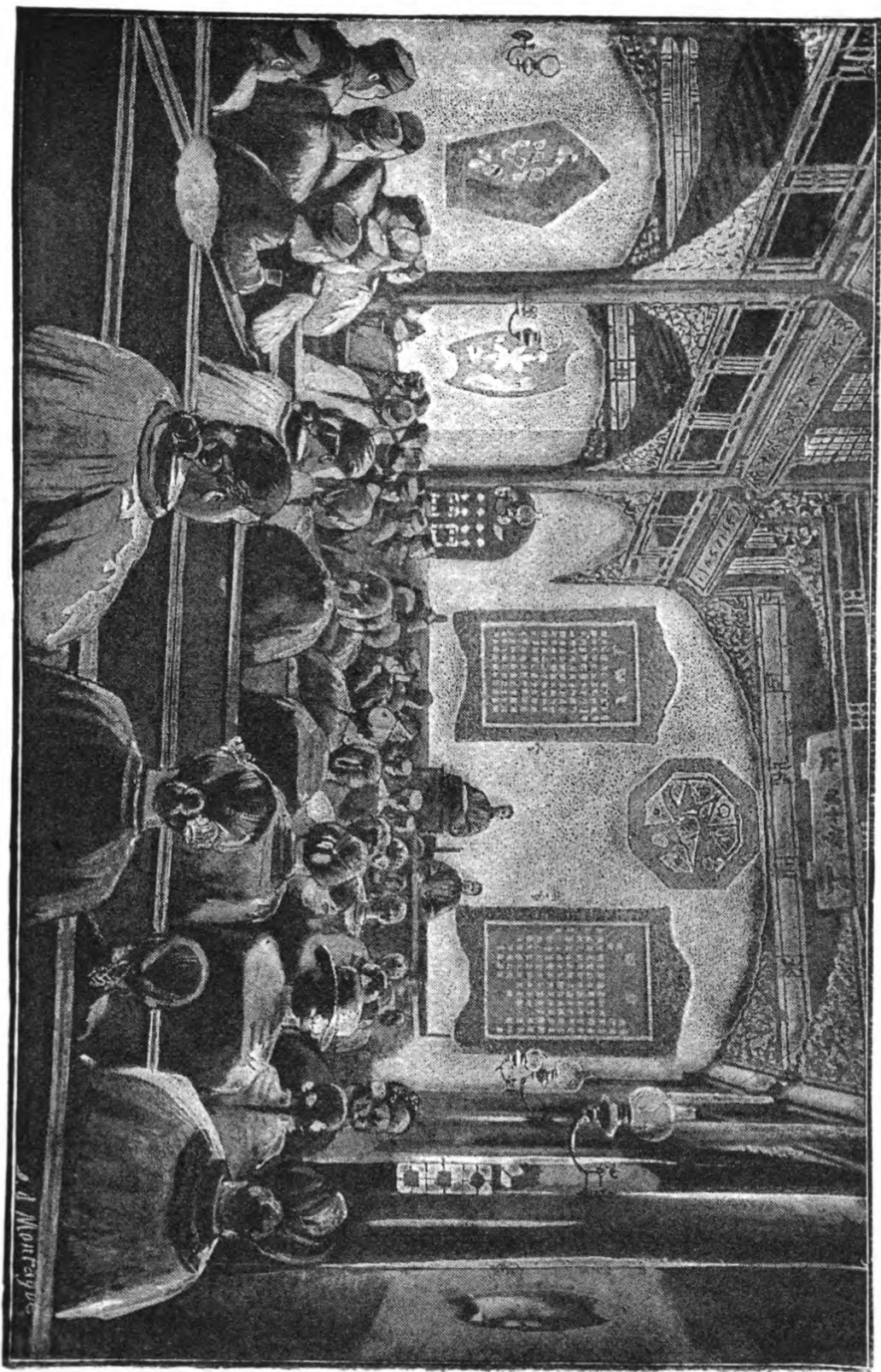
After being away in Mongolia so long alone, I enjoy these meetings and Bible-readings very much.

My dear boys, this is Saturday. It is two o'clock here. It is now 6 a.m. with you. I wish you a very happy Saturday. I wish you always to be happy. Jesus can make you happy. If you are not happy, go to Him, and tell Him, and He'll show you how to be happy.

I wonder how many holidays you had at the new year ? Wishing you a really happy year all through,

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.



THE CHAPEL, TIENTSIN.

Peking, January 20, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I enclose three photos—one for you, one for grandpa, one for Uncle Matthew in Cathkin. It is not very well done, but is like me. I am dressed in the ordinary garb of a Chinaman—just the things I wear when it is spring and autumn. The cap has fur ears inside which turn down in the cold. The coat is wadded. I don't like the expression of the face, but after all it is like me. It is not so pretty looking as yours. I am to be another week yet in Peking, then I hope to go away back again to Mongolia.

Oh, my sons, I pray for you. I hope you are happy at school and at home. I *do* hope you are good, trying to please Jesus, who died that He might save us.

I often think of dear pretty mama and little Alec being in the 'Beautiful city built above.' Do you remember you and she used to sing that beautiful hymn?

Praying much for you, my dear lads,

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Peking, January 25, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

To-day I have taken all the letters I could find from you and bound them up in a volume, to take with me to Mongolia, that I may look through

them and see how you are getting on in writing. The first I have is written shortly after you arrived in Scotland. The last is dated October 27, 1887. The improvement is very marked and very pleasing. Dear boys, do as well as you can. Do not trouble yourself because others are more clever than you. But just you do your best always, and you are sure to get on. Try to do all things well. This is Wednesday. Next Monday I hope to go away again to Mongolia. I may be away a long time. That will not matter at all, as I hope to send you letters every month or so. I hope you will continue to write me letters, addressing as before to London Mission, Peking. They will be sent on to me.

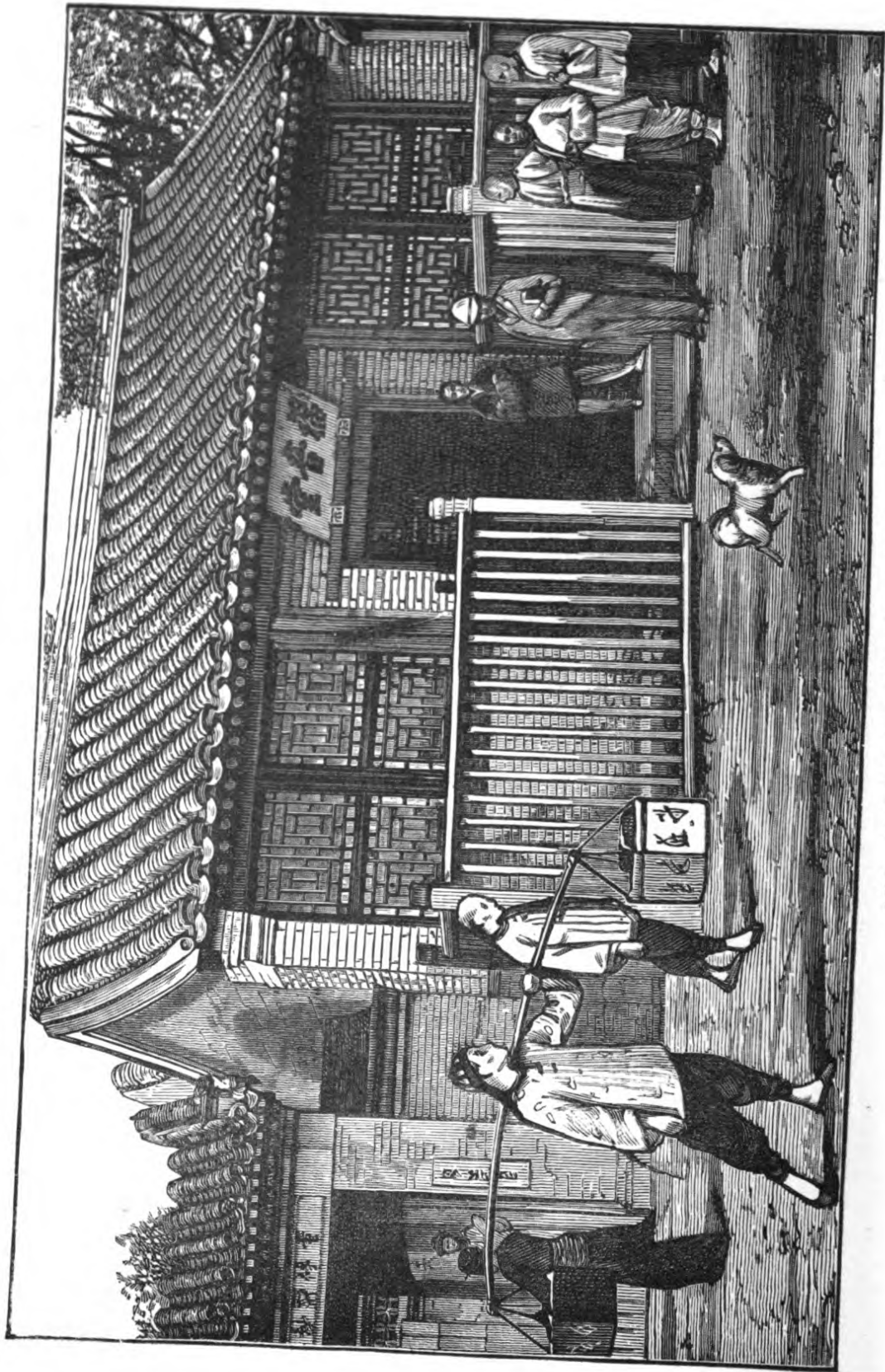
My dear sons, two things are important—always speak the truth, and always make Jesus your Friend. Tell Him everything. You need not fear Him. If you do wrong tell Him, and ask Him to help you not to do it again.

Oh, my boys, I *would* like to see you for a little, and play with you a bit, and kiss you; but that cannot be just yet.

Good-bye meantime, my lads.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.



ONE OF THE CHAPELS IN PEKING.

Peking, January 25, 1888.

To-day I had a visit from a silversmith named Chin. Three or four years ago I met him in one of the chapels in the West City of Peking. At that time I had many conversations with him. He knew Christianity well, but would not take a decided stand and make an open confession. Now he seems to have made up his mind, and says he intends to seek baptism at one of the churches in Peking. We knelt down in my study, and he joined with us in prayer. I had not seen the man for more than two years. Hearing that I was here from Mongolia, he had come to see me.

Ta Ch'eng tzu, Mongolia, February 11, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I got here two days ago. I had such a cold time of it on the road. I never felt the cold so much before.

People here are very busy. This is the last day of the Chinese year. To-morrow is the first day of the Chinese year. Everybody is buying all sorts of food, because the shops do not open for some days after the new year. They are very busy, too, scraping off the old paper at the sides of their doors and pasting up new papers. They (the papers) are red, and look fine at first with the great black Chinese characters written on them. But the sun, after a while, takes the colour out of them. They are busy, too,

pasting up the new gods in their houses. They (the gods) are sheets of paper with pictures of gods on them. Every house has a god of the kitchen. They send him to heaven, as they think, by burning him. They burnt the old one last Saturday. They are putting up the new one now. They think that when he is burnt he goes to heaven, and reports to a god what he has seen in the house during the year. I ask them if I burnt *them*, would they think they were going to heaven? They buy sticky sugar-cakes to give him, so that he may be pleased, and not tell on them for doing evil things. They think, too, that the sugar sticks his lips together, so that when he wants to tell on them he can't get his mouth open! Isn't it all very silly and very sad? The shopkeepers, too, paste up a '*god of riches*,' thinking that thus they will become rich!

To-morrow, Sunday, I hope to baptize a man. He is a Chinaman. That will make four Christians here. They all have faults and weaknesses, and I am not very easy in my mind about them. Pray that God may make them better and make them grow in grace. Pray, too, that God may convert more of the people. Pray, too, that God may give us a house of our own to live in. People here are afraid to let us have a house. Now that Dr. Roberts is coming we will need a house. He is coming in six or seven weeks. Then he stays two months and

goes back to Tientsin for a while again. We saw the Christian at T'a ssü Kow as we passed. The Ch'ao Yang man we have not seen yet.

My dear sons, I think of you often, and pray for you much. You have a photo of mama's grave. Little Alick's little mound is close to mama's, on the side nearer little Edie's. Mama's and Alick's coffins touch down below. They lie together. But mama and Alick are not there. They are in heaven, with its golden streets and its beautiful river, and its trees of life, and its beautiful gates, and its good, loving, kind people, and Jesus and God. They are having such a nice time of it there.

My boys, don't be afraid of dying. Pray to Jesus, do the things He likes, and if you die you will go to Him—to His fine place, where you'll have everything that is nice and good. I don't know whether you or I will go there first, but I hope that by-and-by we'll all be there, mama and Alick and all. I like to think of this. Meantime let us be doing for Jesus all we can, telling people about Him, and trying to persuade them to be His people. Are your schoolfellows Jesus' boys?

I hope to get letters from you in about a month. Good-bye, my dear boys. May you be good and diligent! and then you'll be happy. Jesus can make you glad.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Ta Ch'eng tzu, February 19, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

The Chinese new year has come. This is the eighth day. People are all going about in their best clothes. There are many lanterns in the shops. Yesterday I saw a funny one. It had a face like a clock, with the hours painted on it. When the candle was lit inside, the hands went round. There was a pendulum painted on, but it did not wag.

I have baptized another man here, a Chinaman, but I am not very well pleased with him. Other two, one a woman, have given in their names. I am praying that they may be real Christians. The Roman Catholics here are trying to take away the Christians. May God keep them safe! I am praying that God may arrange all my life, and yours too, my dear sons. Ask Him to lead you and guide you in all things. He'll guide you all right if you only let Him. Love to you both, my dear lads.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, March 14, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I am well, and thankful for it. It is not so cold now. I go daily to the street with my medicines and books and doctor, and preach. There is a farmer here who is very earnest. We met him last year.

Before we met him he fasted and meditated, and thought he would thus become a fairy when he died. He did not say 'die;' he said put off this 'food-bag,' *i.e.* his body. From us he learned the truth as it is in Christ. His family are much opposed to his being a Christian. There is a coppersmith here who is also learning Christianity. He is intelligent, but not so earnest about Christianity as the farmer. Sun, the box-maker, is going on all right—a good, earnest man.

A great cloud of crows come at even and settle on two trees near us. I go to the door and look at them sometimes.

I had such a lot of patients to-day.

I am a little downcast to-day. Yesterday we hired three rooms in this inn for a year. To-day the landlord won't let us have them. The Lord will provide.

I hope to get letters from you in three days now, and then I'll answer them.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, March 25, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

Dr. Roberts arrived here last night. I was so glad to see him. He came before his time. It was nice of him to give me a good surprise.

I am getting on well with my doctoring. I have

lots of patients. There are two more men here who profess Christianity. May they be helped and led!

No letters from you this mail, January 24. But good news about you. It makes me so glad to hear good news of you, my dear sons. I have no news to send you. May both of you belong to Jesus, and may Jesus make you both glad!

You may not hear from me again for two months. Don't suppose I have in any way forgotten you. Blessings on you, my dear sons.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

This goes by the return of the carter who brought Dr. Roberts.

Ch'ao Yang, Mongolia, April 12, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

Dr. Roberts is with me now. We have been together since March 24. It is very pleasant having a companion. Dr. Roberts is a great help to me in every way.

We are having good times among the Chinese—plenty of patients and some inquirers. I doubt if this letter will ever reach you. The lama who takes it is not a reliable man, so I will not write you a long letter at this time, fearing it might be lost, and thus my writing be all in vain.

Your affectionate father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Ch'ao Yang, Mongolia, April 21, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I got a mail from Peking two days ago, but nothing from home. Dr. Mackenzie, of Tientsin, is dead, and Dr. Roberts is called away to take up the vacancy. So I am to be left alone again. Dr. Roberts has been here only three weeks.

I am having lots of patients, and many cures, thank God. The baptized man here seems all right. I am daily in the market-place with my tent. People trust me much. But they stand aloof from Jesus; and I do so want to win them for Him. Oh, boys, let us be true in our hearts to Jesus! The swallows came here April 19. I am in good lodgings here. The window is open and looks out on a great square pagoda not far off, around the top of which crowds of swallows keep circling. I am now to be left alone; but not alone, for God is with me.

This mail goes in two days. I may not send a mail for a good while again. If you don't hear for a while, just suppose I am getting on all right. I pray for you daily.

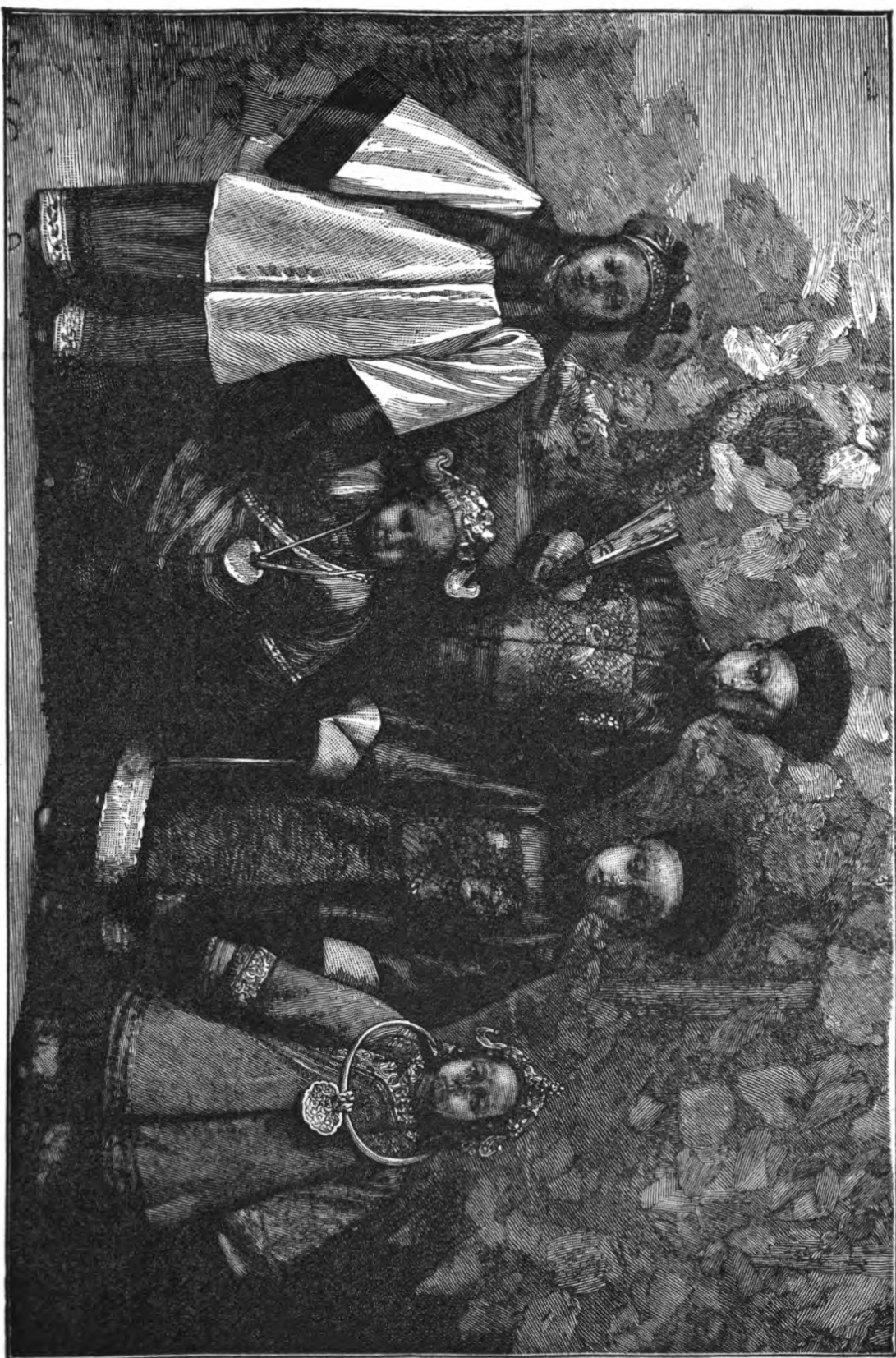
Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

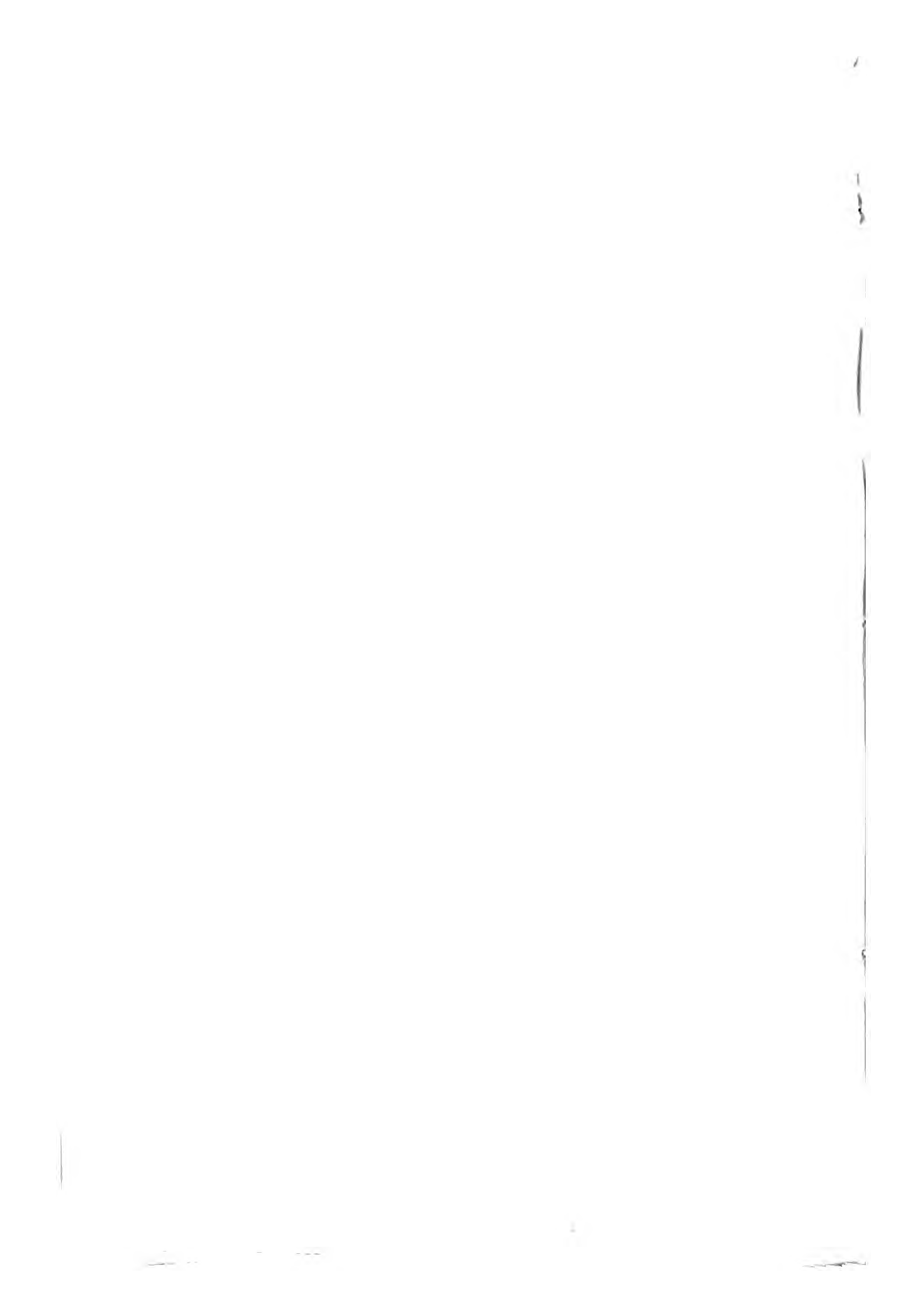
Ch'ao Yang, May 7, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I am very busy here with sick people. I have such a lot of patients. God helps me to cure many of them, but there are lots of cases I can do nothing for. A medical man would be able to cure them. I sometimes wonder if either of you, or both of you, will be missionaries. If you become missionaries, I would advise you to be medical missionaries. To do this you must do your lessons well now while you are at school. Whether you be missionaries or no, always do your lessons well. But, above all, give your heart to Jesus. Speak to Him every day. Tell Him about everything. Ask Him to guide you; ask Him to let you know what you should be and what you should do. Daily live so as to please Him, and He'll look after you. I pray constantly for you, mostly asking that Jesus would save you and make you good. I see lots of children here, and they remind me of you. People, too, ask if I have children, and I tell them of you. When Dr. Roberts was here people all thought he and I were son and father. They asked this question everywhere. Dr. Roberts was much amused. Dr. Mackenzie is dead, and Dr. Roberts has been called away to fill his place. I am thus again left alone. I do not yet know who is coming to be with me, but am praying and hoping for some one soon.



CHINESE CHILDREN.



I have all your letters here, and your portraits and mother's and Alick's, and take them out and look at them from time to time.

No Mongols are Christians yet, but there are some Chinese here who profess Christianity. Everybody is eager to get medicine. If they only knew how good God is, they would want to get Him too. With much love to grandpa, uncles, aunts, and cousins,

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Ta Ch'eng tzu, May 24, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

What are you going to be? You are, perhaps, too young to know yet. I have to doctor thousands of people without having studied medicine. I could do it so much better if I had a medical training. If God calls you to be missionaries, I would like you to have the medical training.

On May 1 I had reported to me cures—

(1) Fever patient, with his face renewed with health, came to my stand, so thankful for his recovery.

(2) A man who had had a bad leg came and showed it healed.

(3) A girl who could not walk was reported as able to walk again.

(4) A man blind before had his eyes improved enough to be able to find his way about.

It was quite cheering to have all these good cures reported in one day. The fever patient, though, had a slight relapse a few days afterwards.

I am greatly interested in young mules and donkeys and foals. Their mothers draw carts and are ridden to market on, and they always follow. It is amusing to see them take every chance to suck, some of them as big almost, if not quite, as their mothers. Big babies! They should be ashamed. A boy came to me one day with a hurt leg. A mother-pig who did not want him round had bitten him. In the inn in Ch'ao Yang, four half-grown pigs used to make a most tremendous uproar several times a day. I paid no heed for a while, but at last could stand the 'row' no longer, and went to see what was the matter. What do you think it was? Why, big babies, they wanted to suck, and their mother would not let them, so they just squealed and squealed, and the old mother-pig kept lying down so that they could not get at her, and grunted and grunted. I could only laugh. Another guest, a Chinaman, at last could stand the noise no longer, and ran out from another room with a big stick, and drove the whole five of them away grunting in a very different style. The people round my stand in the Ch'ao Yang market were greatly amused one day at a cock with its feet tied, lying in a basket carried by a countryman. He had brought it to sell. He stood

in the crowd to see me doctoring the patients and hear what was being said, and the cock, tied up though it was, poor beast, *would* keep crowing. We all laughed to hear its stifled crow as he pushed down its head and shook it when it crowed.

Here in Ta Ch'eng tzu, the other day, a cock came and scraped out a hole for himself in the earth beside my stand, lay and had a rest for a while, then got up and crowed just as if it had been morning, simply because he had just woke up. Good night, lads. It is after nine o'clock here, I guess. With you it is about one p.m. We have to be up at dawn in the morning. I have to read a little, pray a little, and get a bath, so I must stop.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, May 30, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

Yesterday, when a man was asking medicine from me, a thief, who was reading a tract, slyly crouched down and stole a jacket from the man's basket. The man did not notice it till the thief was gone. Then he sent another man to the thief. The thief had pawned the jacket for about fivepence. He had already spent threepence, paid back the twopence, and gave the pawn-ticket. No one seemed to think much harm was done! The thief was going about the street as usual in a little while!

I am doctoring a little homeless lad's head here. I put on ointment all over it to-day. He cried. I said I had medicine that would stop the pain, and brought out six cash—one farthing—and told him to go and have a bowl of buckwheat meal stir-up. All laughed ; he stopped crying, and did not seem to feel the pain after that. Most of the people in the town are much impressed with the improvement in the boy's head. Before he came to me I saw a Chinese medicine-man poking at the lad's head with a straw. When he came I rubbed on ointment with my finger. The bystanders were much pleased to see I was not averse to touching the poor dirty lad's sore head. Jesus touched a leper, and I like to do things like what Jesus would do. That is the right way, boys. Always think what Jesus would have done, and do like Him.

Love and kisses from your affectionate father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Bo-or-Ch'ih, Mongolia, August 13, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS JAMES AND WILLIAM,

This is a wet day. We are rained in. There was no rain for a month. The farmers were much distressed. Last night the rain began. It has now rained twenty-four hours. Every one is in great spirits. But no one thanks God. As thanks for rain, they hire a company of 'Punch-and-Judy' men,



A CHINESE MANDARIN.

M

who come with a tent, and at night give a kind of magic-lantern exhibition. I am glad of the rest the rain has given me. For a month we were much overworked. Night and day patients for medicine, and, thank God, inquirers to be taught. Then we marched twenty-six or twenty-seven miles in a great heat ; then had another long day's work on the street. We got here, I at least, worn out. I have done little since coming here but rest, and thank God. I have a room to myself. I do not often get this. My Chinese assistant usually shares my room, but my Mongol donkey-man is a funny fellow, and persuaded the assistant that my room was alive with bugs, which frightened him so that he shifted to another place. I have not seen a single bug in the place, and don't think there are any, and I think the Mongol did it purposely to let me be alone, as he knows I like a room to myself. The Mongol is a nice kindly fellow, but he won't believe in Christ. We had an accident coming here. I was on ahead to get a bath in a stream. Looking round, I saw them coming all right. Looking round again, I saw the Mongol in the water dragging out our baggage. Next I saw was him washing my coat, and with another man wringing it out. The day was hot, and I had laid my coat on the top of the load. Donkey and all had fallen into the river ! We spread my coat on a rock, put the things to rights, marched on, and by the

time we got to the inn my coat was dry enough to put on as we entered the village. We have no idea how long we may be detained here. We cannot go till the rain stops and the road dries. Two years ago, just about this season, it rained a week. But it does not matter; we have enough money with us, and the roofs are good, so that they are not likely to leak badly.

I was much encouraged at Ch'ao Yang; patients thronged. There were a good many inquirers, and seven men professed Christianity. All Chinese, though; the Mongols are slow to move.

I am eager to hear again from you; your last letter to me is dated March!

This letter does not leave till September 7, by which time I hope to have letters from you.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, September 9, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

I am out on a journey. I knew letters were being sent me, and hoped to meet them. A long way off I saw a red umbrella, the sun shining through the oil-cloth. The thought passed through my mind, 'Can that be the messenger?' But I forgot all about it, reading a book as I walked along. All at once I heard, 'He's come,' and looking up saw the red

umbrella close at hand. It *was* he. The messenger returns to-morrow. I had had no letters for eighty days.

I wrote you last on August 2. Since then several men have professed Christ, and one man has been baptized.

One of the Christians at Ta Ch'eng tzu stole my bank-book and drew money of mine amounting to about £3. He says he is penitent, and we have put him upon a year's probation to see how he does. He is a lazy man. Long ago I said, 'If you are lazy, some day the devil will make you a sinner;' and so he did. Had he been a diligent man he would not have been poor, and would not have stolen. Diligence is a good thing. Laziness is a bad thing. A good Christian cannot be lazy, because he knows Jesus does not like lazy people. I may write you again in a few days. Hoping next mail to get a letter from you (there was none this mail), and asking God to bless you in everything and guide you in all your life,

I am your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Near Ta Ku, near Tientsin, North China,

Tuesday, September 18, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

To-day I have had a ride in a railway train coming from Mongolia on my way to Tientsin. It

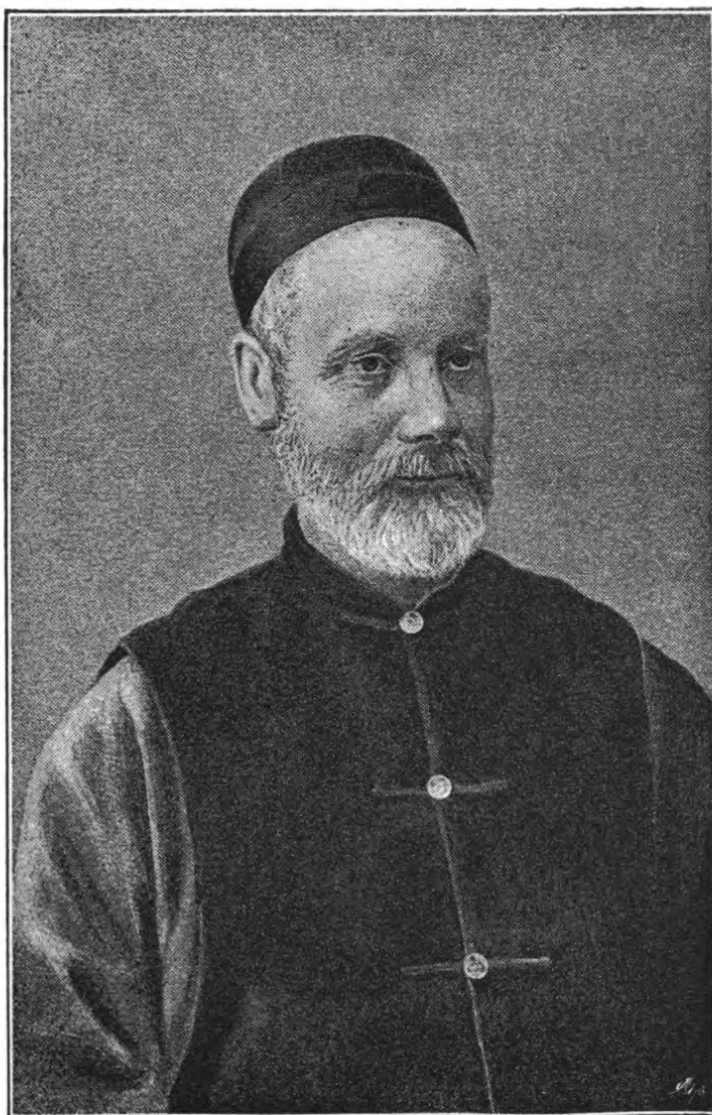
is so strange to see a train in China. And a train in China is so different from a train at home. The carriages are on the American plan—open from one end to the other. The line has no fence on either side. They sometimes run over a pig, and have sometimes to stop and drive off cattle, and even men. The engine-drivers are foreigners, and our guard was a foreigner too. There are only two classes, first and second. The first is like your third at home. There is one great open truck with seats all round. In the centre you can lay your luggage, and those Chinese who have a lot of luggage and won't leave it remain there all during the journey.

They have not got the trains in order yet, so to do ninety English miles we started at five a.m. and ran on till nine a.m. Then I have had to wait till four p.m. to do the rest of the journey. Still, this is so much faster than any other way of travelling. Our train this morning was made up of one first-class carriage, one second, one great truck, eight or ten coal-waggon, and ten or twelve waggon of ballast, as the line is still only in course of construction. A horse and a mule were passengers in the truck in the morning.

Good-bye, my sons, now for the present. I'll write more in a day or two.

Tuesday, September 25, 1888.

I send you my photo. Chinese here say it is like



JAMES GILMOUR.

me. Foreigners say it is not like me. Whom am I to believe? I remain here yet a few days.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Ch'ao Yang, Mongolia, Saturday, November 17, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

On the street to-day I saw a crowd standing. I went up to see what they were looking at, and found two Chinese gentlemen showing off a trained bird. One of the men stood down on the street. The other put three little flags so that they stuck on the wall. The bird then flew away, caught up a flag and came flying back to its master in the street, carrying the flag in its bill. It looked very clever. Every time the bird brought a flag it was rewarded by being fed with some nice food which it liked. It was very pretty to see it. But, after all, it was a very trifling employment for two grown gentlemen to be engaged in. Even the crowd of ordinary Chinese seemed to think so.

I don't like to see birds in captivity. It is pretty to see them wild, flying about, and to hear them singing; but I pity them in cages and tied by string, as the Chinese are fond of doing with them. When I see birds tied, I often think of mama, who used so much to like to see them wild.

I remember one day in Mongolia mama stopped

me from plucking a flower. She said it looked so pretty growing. Another time a little beetle flew and alighted somewhere. Mama said, 'It is so glad that it is alive ; don't hurt it.'

I am a good deal distressed to see the boys in the market-place. They steal just as much as ever they can from the sellers of straw and fuel, pluck out handfuls from the bundles and run away, not at all ashamed. If the owner does not chase them, they get off with it. If he throws down his load and runs after them, they drop the plunder, the owner picks it up, and no more is said about it.

In summer little naked boys follow people carrying fruit in open baskets, and steal them as they can. It all seems so dishonest, and no one seems to care. On the street lots of people will see a thief stealing a man's pipe and never say a word, because it is not their business.

MY DEAR WILLIE I DONT MUCH LIKE
YOUR HAVING A STARLING IN A CAGE
THE OLD BIRDS COME AND FEED IT
YOU SAY IF A GIANT SHUT YOU UP
IN A CAGE AND UNCLE AND AUNT
HAD TO GO AND TAKE YOU YOUR
FOOD BUT COULD NOT GET YOU
OUT TO BRING YOU HOME, WOULD
IT BE NICE FOR YOU? WOULD YOU
LIKE IT. WOULD THE GIANT BE
KIND. YOU ARE THE GIANT TO
THE STARLING. LET IT OUT. IF
IT STAYS WITH YOU TAKE ALL
RIGHT IF IT FLIES AWAY LET
IT GO. LET IT BE HAPPY. IT IS
SO NICE TO SEE BIRDS FLYING.
ABOUT HAPPY PAPA.

November 24.

We are getting on well here. We have about seven or eight people come almost every night to read and learn Christianity for two or three hours. Some of them are, I think, true Christians. They are all Chinese. The Mongols keep aloof. I have now got a servant, and we are more comfortable. He is a Christian. The innkeeper, too, has become very kind and attentive to us this last while, and that makes things better.

I have a thermometer in my room, and find that the temperature is about 42°—ten degrees above freezing. With our Chinese clothes this does not feel cold.

November 28.

I am expecting a messenger to arrive here in a few days from Tientsin, either that or Dr. Smith to come in a few days. So I am writing to you now, because, when a messenger or Dr. Smith arrives, I'll have little time. There will be a lot of letters want answering.

Four men, Chinese, have been baptized here at this visit, and two more are waiting for baptism. I am so thankful for these, but I wish there were as many hundreds. We have had a fine day in the market-place—lots of people, and very attentive Good-bye meantime, my boys. Kisses and much love from

Your affectionate father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Ch'ao Yang, Mongolia, December 7, 1888.

MY DEAR SONS,

At my medicine-stand the other day a man brought his little son of four or five years of age, dressed up as a tiger. His coat and trousers were just like. His trousers at the feet had flaps like paws, his back had stripes, and his hat had eyes, nose, and mouth. He had even a good-sized tail, which stood up and wagged as he walked. He looked so funny. Even the Chinese thought he was queer. I suppose it was a superstitious notion the father had that such a dress was lucky. Poor ignorant people!

We have a good many boys who come to learn the Catechism in the evening. Oh that all men knew of Jesus and God, and heaven and hell! The Chinese mostly don't believe in any one of these.

Praying much for you,

I am your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

MONGOLIA JAN 23 1889

MY DEAR DEAR SON WILLIE

I AM NOT SO BUSY JUST
NOW SO WRITE YOU A LETTER
WITH A CHINESE PEN. I DO NOT
HAVE AN ENGLISH PEN BECAUSE
THE INK FREEZES WHEN I TRAVEL
ABOUT. AFTER I GET SETTLED
DOWN I WILL HAVE PROPER PEN
AND INK AND WRITE YOU PROPER
LETTERS. I AM GLAD TO HEAR
YOU ARE IN BETTER HEALTH. DO YOUR
LESSONS AS WELL AS YOU CAN AND
YOU WILL GROW UP TO BE A USEFUL
MAN, IF GOD SPARES YOU. TELL ALL
YOUR TROUBLES AND FEARS TO
JESUS AND HE WILL LOOK AFTER

2
YOU IN ALL THINGS. MAMA IS WITH
JESUS NOW AND TALKS WITH
JESUS ABOUT YOU AND YOU
AND JIMMIE WILL NOT WANT ANY
GOOD THING. ONLY TRUST HIM
AND OBEY HIM AND SPEAK TO
HIM EVERY DAY AND ASK HIM
TO SAYE YOU AND IT WILL
BE ALL RIGHT.

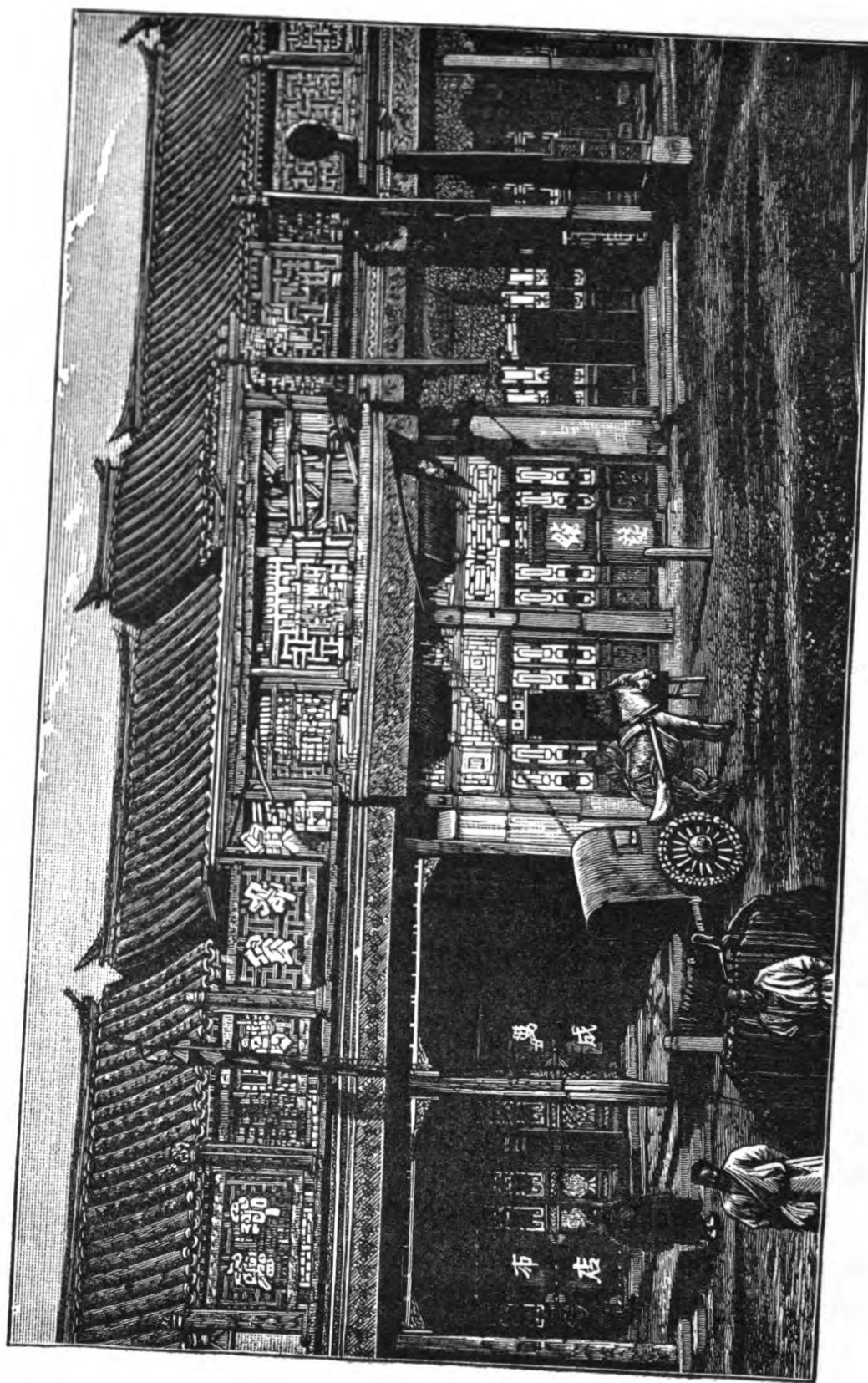
I LIKE ONE OF YOUR PORTRAITS
VERY MUCH. YOU LOOK A ~~NICE~~ NICE
LAD. MAY GOD COMFORT YOU
AND BE WITH YOU DAILY. MY OWN
DEAR BOY I WOULD LIKE TO SEE
YOU AND DEAR JIMMIE AND
TALK WITH YOU. I HOPE TO

SEE YOU SOME DAY OR ³
OTHER BUT CANNOT JUST
NOW SAY WHEN.

WITH MUCH LOVE TO YOU AND
JIMMIE AND PRAYING MUCH
FOR YOU

YOUR LOVING FATHER
JAMES GILMOUR

N



PEKING SHOPS.

CHAPTER V

SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND, AND CLOSING YEARS

THE hope of seeing his boys, which Mr. Gilmour utters at the close of the last letter quoted, was to be realized sooner than he thought when he wrote the words. He had been living a very hard and a very lonely life for nearly three years. As you remember, just before beginning this new work he had had to part with his dearly loved boys. Only a short time before that, Mrs. Gilmour had died. For a few brief weeks the strongest desire of his heart, the presence of a doctor to help him in his work, had been granted, and then the death of Dr. Mackenzie, at Tientsin, snatched Dr. Roberts away from his side. Thus wave after wave of trial rolled over him. And in addition to all this, there was so much in his work to disappoint and discourage him, and so little to make his heart glad. Although he was a man of great faith, of great courage, of wonderful endurance, it is not surprising that at times his heart failed him and that his bodily strength gave way.

Meanwhile, the Directors of the London Missionary Society had appointed Dr. Smith to go as Mr. Gilmour's helper in the place of Dr. Roberts. But there was a delay of many months—long, weary, lonely months they were to Mr. Gilmour—before Dr. Smith could reach Ch'ao Yang, and begin work there. Towards the end of 1888 Mr. Gilmour wrote home, 'My heart is set on reinforcements. Can they not be had? I had hoped Dr. Smith would have spent the winter with me; but he did not. All the grace needed has been given me abundantly, but I don't think there should be any more solitary work. I don't think it pays in any sense. In addition, it is almost time I had a change. My eyes are bad. Doctors hesitate over my heart, and say that it is weak.'

And yet how strong was his faith in God! He often felt very depressed—'blue' he used to call it. In his diary there are entries like these: 'Down-cast day;' 'In terrible darkness and tears for two days. Light broke over me at my stand to-day, in the thought that Jesus was tempted forty days of the devil after His baptism, and that He felt forsaken on the cross.' He had trials with his converts. One robbed him at Ta Ch'eng tzu, and yet he writes, 'The ten days we passed we were the song of the drunkards and the jest of the abjects; but the peace of God passes all understanding, and that kept my heart

and mind. The great thought in my mind these days, and the great object of my life, is to be like Christ. As He was in the world, so are we to be.'

In March, 1889, Dr. Smith reached Mongolia, and saw Mr. Gilmour for the first time. They met at Ta Ch'eng tzu. Dr. Smith says, 'I shall never forget that first meeting. I had pictured quite a different-looking man to myself. I saw a thin man, of medium height, with clean-shaven face, got up in Chinese dress, much the same as the respectable shopkeepers in that part of the country wear. On his head was a cap lined with cat's fur. I was struck by the kindly but determined look on his face.' But Dr. Smith's practised eye at once saw that there was something seriously wrong with Mr. Gilmour. He was overstrained and in great danger of a very severe illness. And so, after a few days, he had to tell him that it was his duty to go away at once and rest, and that the best thing he could do was to go home to Scotland as soon as it could be arranged, and see his boys and his friends.

And so it came to pass that, three months after he had written to Willie, 'I hope to see you some day or other, but cannot just now say when,' he was on his way home. He left Peking April 4, 1889, and he travelled so quickly that he was in London on May 25. That is, he was at home before most of his friends knew that he was even thinking of coming.

On May 27, 1889, the writer was sitting in his room, overlooking the pleasant garden that brightens up the north-eastern corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, in conversation with a gentleman, when a knock came at the door and a head appeared. Not seeing it very clearly, and at the same time asking for a minute's delay while the business in hand was completed, the head disappeared. As soon as the first visitor departed, a man entered and stood near the door. I looked at him, with the conviction that I knew him, and yet could not recall the true mental association, when the old smile broke over his face, and he burst into a laugh, saying, 'Why, man, you don't know me?' 'Yes, I do,' I replied; 'you're Gilmour; but I thought that at this moment you were in Mongolia.' But when I was able to look at him closely I was shocked to see so many signs of stress and strain. It was not wholly strange, even in an old friend, to fail to recognize, in the worn and broken man, thought to be hard at work many thousands of miles away, the strong and cheery Gilmour of 1883.

Much as he needed rest, and earnestly as his friends wished him to lengthen out his stay at home, Mr. Gilmour had hardly reached London before he began to think of returning. He rapidly improved in health. He had a fine summer holiday with his boys at Millport, on the west coast of Scotland. He

went about the country, stirring up the faith and zeal of a large number of Churches. But the Mongols were the closest to his heart, and by the end of 1889 nothing could keep him longer at home. He felt he must go back, and go he did, long before many who loved him thought it wise. He sailed on his return voyage on January 9, 1890, in the steamship Peshawur. The next three letters were written during this voyage.

S.s. Peshawur, in the Bay of Biscay,
Saturday, January 11, 1890.

MY VERY DEAR SONS,

Last night was foggy. The captain kept blowing his whistle. After a while we heard another steamer blow its whistle. We could not see that other steamer, so we stopped our engine and went slowly till we were past it. There is a family on board. There are three little children. They are always in mischief. One of them opened a port-window in the saloon, and let the wind blow in on an old gentleman. Another time, he or his brother pocketed the men for playing draughts with. He was brought back and had to put them all out. The baby, ten months old, got hold of the large dinner-bell, and it began to ring. This morning the second brother came crying to table beside his mother, and was sick there and then. There are a lot of nice people on board, and we have lots of singing.

Monday, January 13, 1890.

Have had a nice Sunday. To-day has been very fine weather. The three children are settling down a little better now. We are not having any influenza on board.

Things are going on nicely. Cheer up, boys! Do not be lonely. Write regularly to mother¹ every week, and write regularly at the proper time to me. Pray for me. I pray for you. May you have God's blessing resting on you! May He comfort you when you need comfort!

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

S.s. Peshawur, Red Sea, one day from Aden,

Sunday, January 26, 1890.

MY VERY DEAR SONS JAMES AND WILLIAM,

More than much love to you both. More than many prayers for your good. May you be kept near to Jesus! He can comfort your hearts. It is just seventeen days since we sailed, and, eh, man, it *is* hot. I am learning some hymns. We saw some flying fish the other day. To-day the Oceana has passed us. She left London the day after us. Be friends with all who are good. Read your Bibles. I'll write you again from Colombo.

Off Portugal we saw a very curious cave blowing the spray very high. A lot of air got enclosed in

¹ Their aunt, Mrs. Alexander Gilmour ; and so in later letters.

the cave, and the force of the water made it rush out at high pressure, blowing the spray very high.

When you write me tell me as many things as you can. I am very much interested in all details and particulars of your school life. Pray for me.

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Near Singapore, Monday, February 10, 1890.

MY DEAR SONS,

We are now in the Straits of Malacca. Yesterday we were at Penang. It is a most beautiful place. The trees are so many and so green. I went to the seaside, and sat under the shadow of a great tree. There were some funny little creatures like fish at the edge of the water on the sand. I went to look at them, but they went off into the water so very fast. They could run and hop so fast. When I went after them they ran away to some stones quite near, but in the water, and sat there looking at me, quite cheeky like.

We had a nice little service at a mission-hall, Chinese and English. We have a post-office on board this ship, the *Massilia*. There are men sorting the letters and getting them all ready to deliver when we get to Singapore and Hong-Kong. I have your portrait up in my cabin. I often look at it and think of you, my dear sons. I trust that you are

getting on all right with your lessons, and that you are keeping up your letters to mother, and that you will send me good letters when you write me.

Much love and many kisses from your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

At Shanghai he had to change into a coasting steamer, and the following letter describes the end of his voyage :—

S.s. Massilia, February 20, 1890.

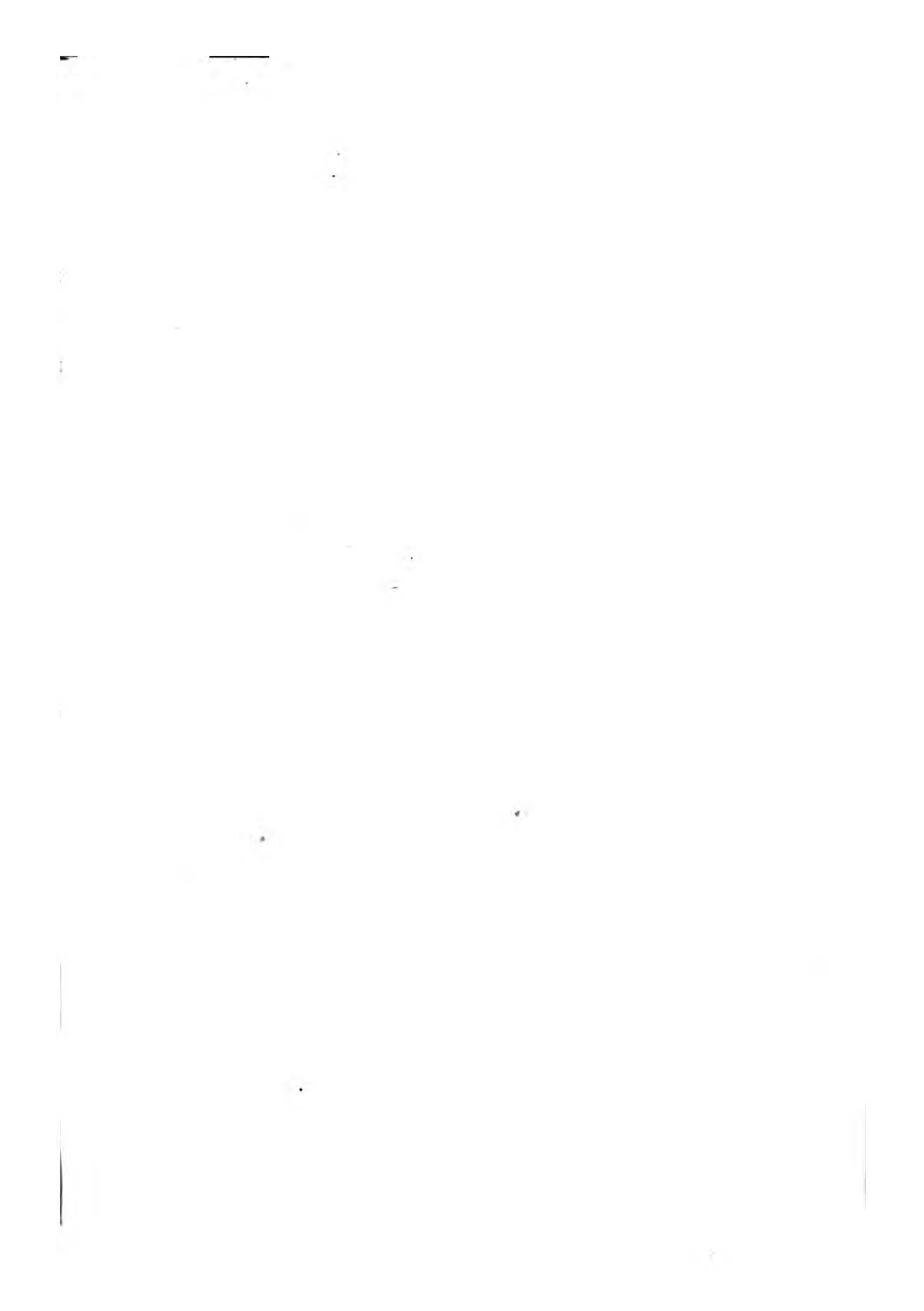
MY DEAR SONS,

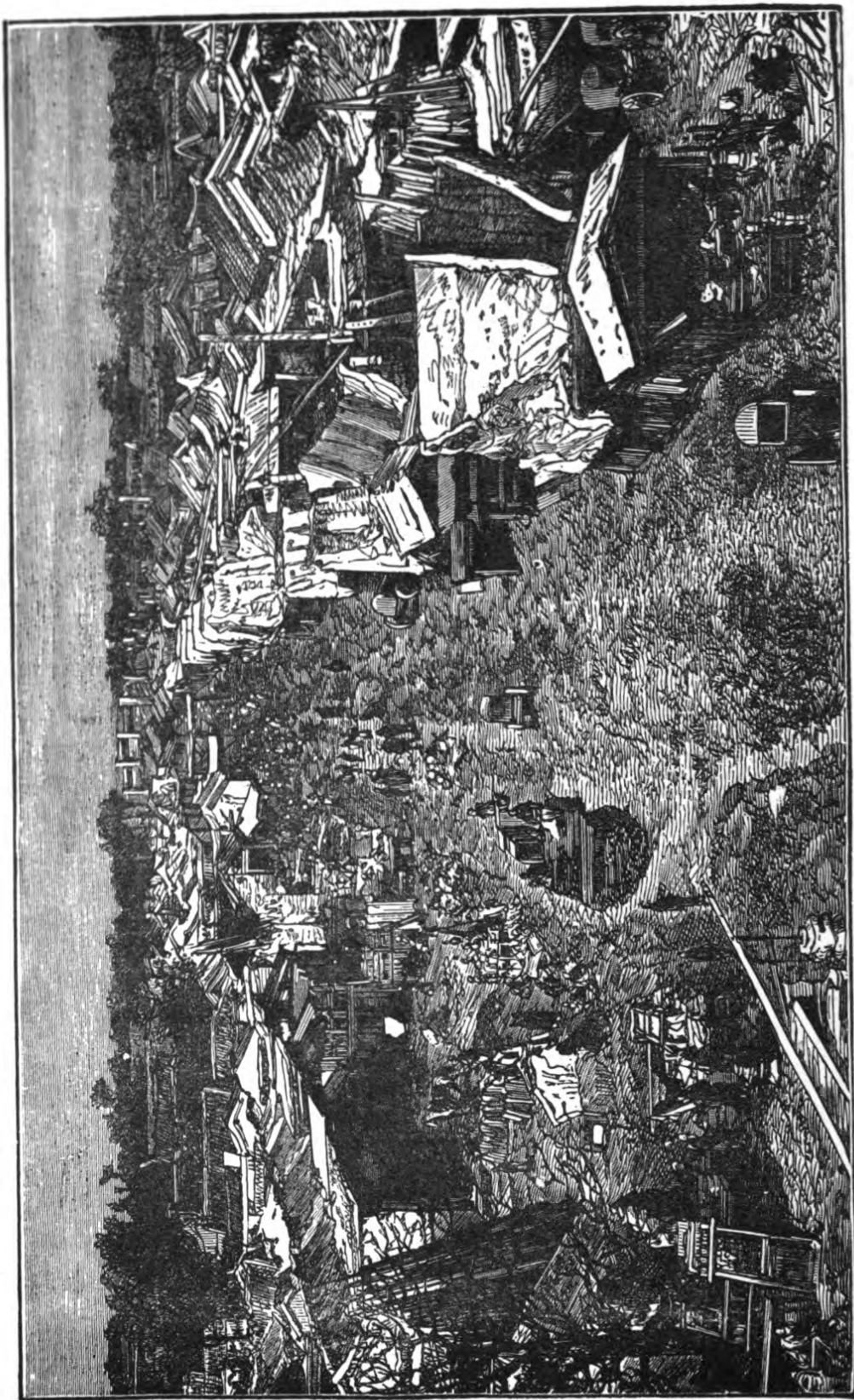
We had a bad time last night. There was a thick fog. We kept blowing the steam-whistle. Other steamers kept answering back. It was dangerous. Then there were lots of little Chinese ships all about. They had no lights. When we came near them they all cried out. Some of them beat gongs and burnt paper and lit lanterns to let us see them, so that we might not run over them. We were very close to some of them. They passed quite close to us in the dark. We had no accident. I am thankful.

S.s. Poo Chi, Taku, March 1, 1890.

Here I am. We had a very rough time coming up from Shanghai.

The spray came over and froze up all on the blowy





A PEKING STREET.

side of the ship. It *was* cold. I hope to be in Tientsin to-night.

Good-bye, and many blessings on you. Love to all, from your affectionate father,

Tientsin, Tuesday, March 4, 1890.

Got here on Sunday, March 2. All well. Much love.

JAMES GILMOUR.

The following letter describes the way in which he reached Peking :—

Peking, March 14, 1890.

MY DEAR SONS,

Just a little letter to say that I got here all right yesterday. I had a funny adventure when I came into the city of Peking. I was sound asleep, covered up in my cart, when it upset. I was so wrapped up and mixed up with baggage that I could not get out. I was quite comfortable, and lay a little, thinking that some one, the carter, would come and help me out. But no ; no one came. At last the Chinese who had gathered round began to say there could be no one in the cart. They were greatly amused when I began to put my head out and crawl from the cart. No one was at all hurt.

Be sure I remember your dear faces very often. I pray for you. May God bless you both ! I will

write again in a day or two. Kisses to you both.
Love to all.

Your affectionate father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

And thus, only a little over ten months after he left Peking, weary and broken in health, he returned, full of fire and vigour, and eager to resume his hard and thankless toil in Eastern Mongolia. He was greatly cheered. Dr. Smith was to be with him. Mr. Parker, a student of his own old college, Cheshunt, had been appointed to labour with him, and he took up the burden of his evangelistic work with the hope and expectation of much blessing. He started for Ch'ao Yang on March 24, 1890, and the letters to his boys, interrupted for a year, begin again.

April 16, 1890.

MY DEAR BOYS,

Yesterday, when out for a walk, I counted fifteen crows' nests all on one tree. The tree was not large. It was in a street in the town. Such a cawing as they made, whole thirty crows! Some nests were finished, some were just building. The Chinese think it lucky to have crows build near them. The Chinese do not disturb the nests.

Thieves are very bad here. About thirty of them live in one street. They are well known, but don't

often get apprehended. When they do, they soon get out again, and go on as before.

I am flitting to-day into larger and better rooms, all in the same inn. I have taken the larger rooms, preparing for Dr. Smith and Mr. Parker to come.

More love and kisses from your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, June 27, 1890.

MY DEAR SON JAMES,

Your very, very welcome and nice letter of April 9th to hand to-day. Thank you for the nice account of the paper-hunt. It must be great fun, and it is certainly good exercise. I am glad you enjoy it. I wrote to you about three days ago, and this goes in a week or so from now.

There is a great religious festival here—worshipping an idol in place of God. Drums and gongs beating away at a great rate. I do not wonder that God sends no rain, when He is dishonoured so. Pray that people's eyes may be opened, and men may be converted to the true God. One part of the worship is putting three little girls away aloft up high on a frame, and carrying them through the streets to the idol-temple and back. The girls like it. They are dressed up in very fine clothes, and, after the procession is over, are taken to the theatre, and have lots of nice things to eat.

I see, my dear son, that you have a little trouble with your spelling. I hope you'll get it all right. Be as careful and diligent as you can. Being able to write and spell nicely, and being able to figure well, will be a great help to you when you grow up. Be a boy, too, to know and love Jesus. Tell Him all your things. It comforts me greatly here to know you are going on well at home. Then think that mama too sees you, and rejoices in all your good.

I hope you are learning to swim. But be careful. Don't go beyond your depth when there is no need for it. With much love and many kisses, from your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, July 21, 1890.

MY VERY DEAR SONS JAMES AND WILLIAM,

My last letter to you left here July 3. I do not know when this may leave, but I have time to-day, and write to be ready.

Since July 3 the weather has been so wet that of these eighteen or nineteen days only about five have been fair enough to go on to the street with my tent. Things came to a crisis on Saturday night—this is Monday—when it rained so hard that the ceilings of all our five rooms came down, almost from end to end. The roof leaked so much that, on a Chinaman's suggestion, I put up my street tent in my room, and

was thus fairly dry under it ; but even then the great drops would sprinkle in through. I kept the lamp burning all night, and had a warm *k'ang*, so I was not so badly off after all. Next day—Sunday, July 20—we had a great time drying our things. Everything—roof, walls, and floors—are damp and wet still. We fared better than many people, and are very thankful that no walls fell down.

Dr. Smith is here now, and as he does the doctoring, I am not so busy.

Mongolia, September 4, 1890.

MY DEAR SON JAMES,

I send you two little packets of a strange plant. It is a weed. It is a parasite—a plant which lives on other plants. It looks like a lot of yellow threads. It is a thin twining grass which overruns any plant near it, and chokes it. It hugs the plant to death—smothers it. The first time I saw it I thought some one had thrown down hot water and scalded the grass yellow. The one parcel is just a mass of the grass. There are a few flowers, and, I think, one seed-pod. Open it and see. The other parcel is a bean leaf covered on the shank with a mass of the flowers.

Praying much for your prosperity,

Your affectionate father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

O

Tuesday, October 28, 1890.

MY DEAR SONS,

Yesterday and to-day I have been travelling through some good scenery. There were some picturesque rocks.

(1) One was the Two Temple Rock. It is a great column of stone on the top of a hill. The rock is split in two, the two pieces standing a little apart. There is a small shrine on the top of each. The perpendicular sides of the rock are not smooth, and, seen from some points, seem as if there were huge faces of men carved in outline. The faces and appearances change as you travel round, and at one place the faces are grotesque.

(2) Another hill has on its ridge three great pieces of stone, so like three huge dogs sitting up there. One of the three seems to be looking over its shoulder.

(3) Another rock looks like an immense wall built up; but it is no wall, only a natural rock looking like a wall.

(4) Another rock is very funny. It is a stone on the ridge of a hill just like a man's Scotch bonnet.

(5) Another is the Hole Mountain—a hill with an immense perforated rock right on the top. It is first seen from a hill-top over which the road passes. There it is some fifteen or twenty miles away, but the hole is seen quite distinct, the daylight appearing through it.

The trees are so beautiful just now. The leaves are off many of them, but on some they are tinted all colours—russet, red, yellow, green, of so many different shades. The orchards of fruit trees are the most beautiful. The autumn tints on their leaves are the most striking.

On Sunday I took a walk to the top of the hill. There were some trees about—not many, though, for, as you know, trees are scarce in China. I saw something tied on to a tree and standing away high above it. At first I could not make out what it was; but after looking at it a while I saw it was a trap to catch large birds, such as crows, hawks, small eagles, etc. The upper little cross-rod is loosely fixed in. When a bird alights on it, down goes the rod, out slips a little pin, and bang goes the large bent branch. Then up flies the doubled cord. This string tightens round the bird's legs, and it is held fast. I saw four or five of these traps on the hill, but saw no birds in them.

All about this road are large flocks of goats. They are all black—as black as a coal. They are sleek and glossy. They feed on the mountains, and have a grand time among the rocks. One day I saw the earth give way under a goat's feet. Down it came some distance, but did not seem to care in the least, keeping on its feet all the time. They eat very nimbly, and look so smart with their beards. Their

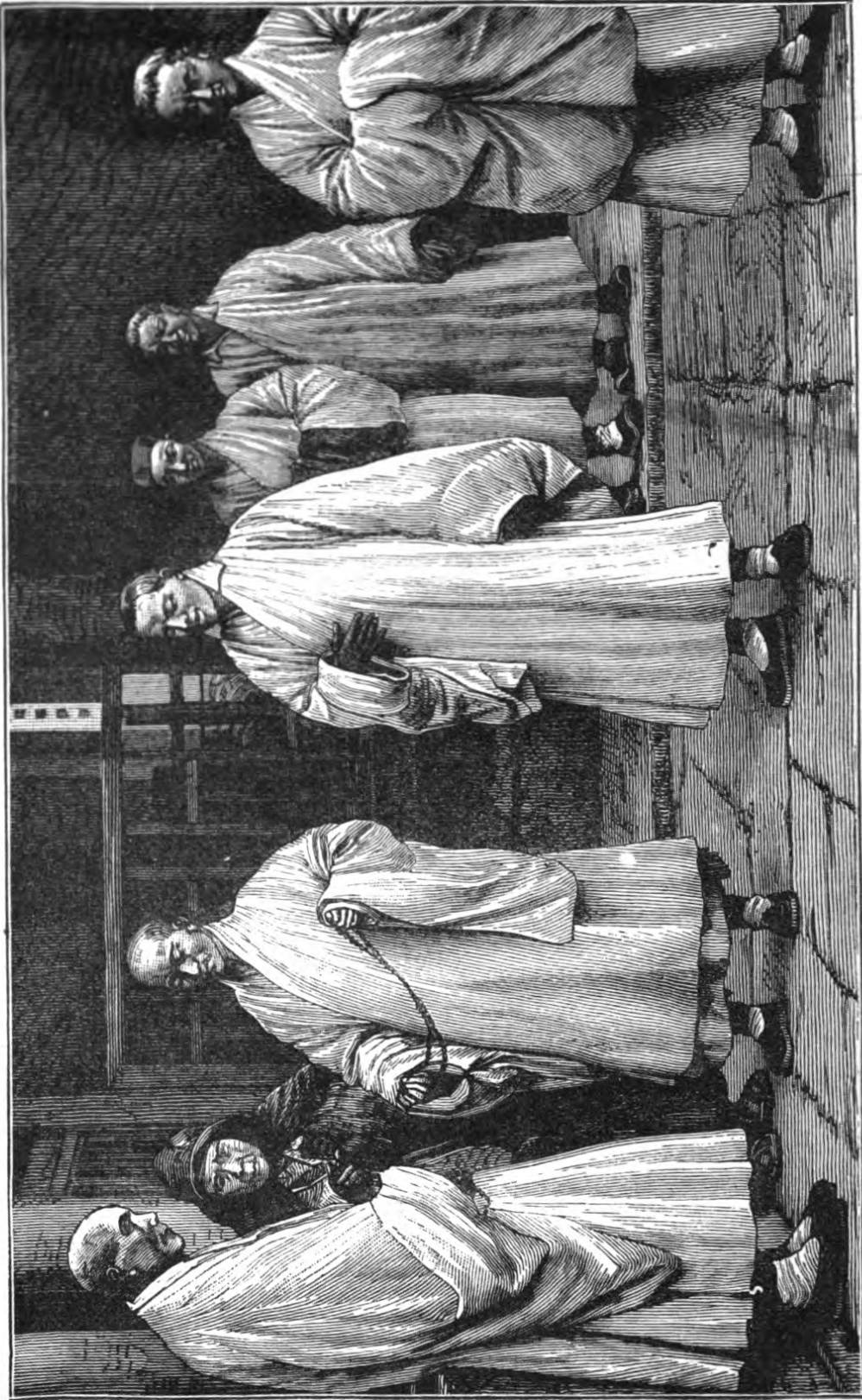
horns are all sorts, many of them flat. They are often fighting and butting each other in a playful way.

I saw a drove crossing a river one day. They were wet, and ran and frisked about when they got out—to dry themselves, I suppose. The pigs have been having a grand time this last month. It was harvest-time, and lots of grain gets dropped about the roads and fields. The pigs run loose and gather it up. They become quite playful and frisky. One day I saw two sleek black pigs playing so prettily. Their play consisted in pushing each other, and trying to upset each other on some soft dry earth. They looked so happy.

But the donkeys are the creatures here. There are so many of them on the road, carrying grain, etc., to the market, and many of them have their foals with them. The foals seem so happy. Some of them are about as big as their mothers. To-day we met a man with four animals carrying grain. He had a horse. That he was leading. There were two youngish donkeys. He had an old donkey which he made go first, and act as leader. He was a wise old donkey, and knew a lot. He knew where to go, and the younger ones followed him.

Some of the donkeys are loaded with *kao liang* stalks for fuel. The stalks are so very long that they go beyond the head and tail of the donkey. About all you can see are four legs. The donkey does not





IN A BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

like it. He cannot hold up his ears. He has to go all the way with his ears down. It seems most laughable.

Many of the country donkeys have many idle days. They like that, and are driven out on to the hills to feed along with the cows and sheep.

I wonder how much you remember of China. Quite common on the roadside are small temples about the size of a dog-house, only with the hole in the side—a small hole too, the house itself too small for a dog. Inside are nine idols. These small shrines are called the temples of the nine gods. Incense is burnt there. Do you remember the temple at the hills, and the priest, and the incense burning, and the striking of the gong?

Good-bye for the present. I must go to bed. We have to be up early, perhaps about four o'clock, tomorrow. I have still three days' journey, then I get to my station, where I hope to see the preacher and the Christians.

Please send me long letters, telling me all about yourselves and your doings, and how the prayer-meeting goes on. Give my love to all to whom you may be writing.

With many kisses,

Your loving father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

You can hardly, I think, read these letters without liking to know exactly how Mr. Gilmour passed his days during the summer of 1890, the last summer he was to spend on earth. Dr. Smith, who was with him part of the time, has given us the following very interesting description :—

‘ He always got up at daylight, folded up bedding, and then began reading. About six a man arrived, selling hot millet and bean porridge. He bought two bowls of this for early breakfast. He continued reading Chinese, generally aloud ; and when he came to a difficult word he repeated it again and again, in order to impress it upon his memory. About eight he had breakfast, consisting of Chinese rolls and a cup of cocoa.

‘ At nine he went to the street with his tent, Mr. Liu, the native preacher, accompanying him. One of the inn-servants assisted the latter in carrying tent and medicine-boxes and in erecting same. The tent was erected in a broad street at the back of our inn, where a daily market was held. The medicine-boxes were placed on a little table, in front of which stood a wooden form and another at the side. The patients were seated on these. Any difficult cases were sent to the inn to be treated by me. On the table were also a number of copies of various tracts and portions of Scripture. Mr. Gilmour dispensed medicines, talked, and preached as the opportunity offered.



LIU, MR. GILMOUR'S CHINESE ASSISTANT.

‘About one he returned to the inn, and had dinner, consisting of meat, etc., which was bought at a Chinese cook-shop. About three we generally took a walk to the country. We used to go out to look at the various crops, and Mr. Gilmour would chat away to one and another whom we met on the road. He was generally recognized, and in the most friendly way. I have a very pleasant recollection of these times; often our conversation would turn to home—to our boys and friends. Sometimes he would tell me about his student-friends, while at other times he used to tell me of his deputation work at home, and about the various people he had met there.

‘Often a gentleman would come up and ask, “Where are you going?” to which Mr. Gilmour would reply, “We are cooling ourselves; we are going nowhere.” It was always a mystery to people what we could possibly mean by taking walks to the country. One day two lads followed us for some miles across some low hills, anxious to know our business, and getting well laughed at by their friends, poor fellows, on their return to the town.

‘One thing about Mr. Gilmour always impressed me deeply—his wonderful knowledge of the little touches of Chinese politeness, and his wonderful power of observation. He loved the Chinese—looked upon them and treated them as brothers, and was a man who lived much in prayer; and in this lay his great power as a missionary.

‘ When he met a Mongol he would exchange a few words of Mongol with him, and it was wonderful to see the man’s face light up as he heard his own tongue. All the Mongols knew that he could speak their language.

‘ As we returned to the town, and were walking along the street, many of the passers-by would bow ; and here and there a shopkeeper would give him a friendly bow. Sometimes he would buy a few peaches or apples, and not unfrequently he would give a sweetmeat-vendor two cash for two sweets, handing one to me.

‘ About half-past four we returned to the inn, and then, as a rule, some people would be there waiting to see him. Mr. Sun, the box-maker, used often to come to read the Scriptures with Mr. Gilmour, and then they would discuss various points—Mr. Sun giving his opinion, and then Mr. Gilmour putting him right. Sometimes an outsider would drop in, and then, not unfrequently, Mr. Sun would talk to him about the gospel.

‘ About six Mr. Gilmour had some cocoa and bread. At the time of the lighting of the candles Mr. Gilmour had made it a rule for the Christians to assemble for evening prayers, and, accordingly, they all turned up then. A Chinese table was placed in the centre of Mr. Gilmour’s room, and three wooden forms were placed round the table for the accommodation of



A CHINESE TOY-SELLER.

the preacher and the Christians. Mr. Gilmour and I used to sit on chairs at the vacant side of the table. On the table stood two Chinese candlesticks, each surmounted by a Chinese candle. A Chinese candle is made from the castor bean, and is fixed to the candlestick by running the iron pin on the latter into a hollow straw in the end of the candle. Then we also had a Chinese oil-lamp. The upper vessel is simply a little earthenware saucer, containing a little oil, and in it lie some threads of cotton (a cotton wick). This is made to project over the edge of the saucer, and is then lighted. The lower part of the lamp is simply an earthenware receptacle, in which the oil for replenishing the lamp is kept, and, while in use, the little lamp is supported in it. This often used to remind me of the parable of the virgins, and in reading that parable by the light of such a lamp one is able to make it very realistic to Chinamen.

‘Our evening worship consisted in first singing a hymn, Mr. Gilmour leading. Then Mr. Gilmour offered up a short prayer; after which we read a chapter, either in the Old or New Testament, reading verse about. Each man had a copy of the Scriptures. Then Mr. Gilmour gave a little address on the chapter; after which we had another prayer—one of the Christians being asked this time. Then another hymn and the benediction.

‘Usually one or more of the Christians would re-

main chatting with Mr. Gilmour. As soon as they had gone we had a cup of cocoa together. Then Mr. Gilmour and I used to have evening prayers together. He used to read a chapter from a little book by Mr. Moule, and then we both prayed.

'After this we used to sit chatting together until bedtime, and so ended a day.'

Ch'ao Yang, August 19, 1890.

MY DEAR SONS,

I have just got here after a hard journey of four days. It is summer, and the rains are on ; the roads are very bad.

Our first adventure was in a deep narrow gully going up a mountain. We met a cart coming down. There was no room to pass and no room to turn back. What were we to do? One of the carts had to be pulled up the bank. Neither would go up. Both carters sat and looked at each other. Our cart was heavy. The other cart was light. After looking at each other a while, the other cart was pulled up, and our carter helped it down again after we had passed.

Our next adventure was in a river. The leading mule sank in a quicksand. The carter, shoes and all, jumped into the water. In a few seconds I had stripped all but a cinglet and pants, and was in the river too. We got out after a little while.

Next day we stuck in a quagmire. We hitched

the mules to the tail of the cart, pulled it out, then dug a new road in the side of the ravine and got past.

The third day we upset our cart in a very muddy place early in the morning, and got caught in a thunder-shower in the afternoon.

The fourth day we stuck in a mud-hole half a mile from the end of our journey; and when we got to our inn, found our rooms in possession of a crowd of people doing a wedding.

One thing made the journey very pleasant. It was this. Just as we were starting, one of the Christians, a Chinese farmer, but a man who is poor, and dresses and eats very poorly, came and gave me two tiao—about a dollar—to give to God. I was so glad to see him do it, and no doubt God was glad too. Then at the end of the journey, when we were stuck in the mud-hole and could not get out, up came one of the Christians, took off his stockings and shoes, went into the mud, and helped us out. The country was very beautiful all the way—just at its best.

I wonder if you are giving a tenth of all the money you get to God? I think it is a right thing to do and a good thing. Mama did it. I do it. And God never lets us want for money. I would be glad if you would like to do it. But don't do it merely to please me. Don't do it except you can do it gladly. God likes people to do things gladly. I am quite

sure you would get blessing by it. Money given to God is never lost. And it is easier to begin the habit now than later.

When you give it to God you can put it into the London Missionary Society box. It would only be fair to give some little part of it at the collection at the church to which you go. You could give some of it for destitute children. It does not matter much where you give it. I think the London Missionary Society has the best claim. Think over it, boys. Jesus died to save us. Surely we can show our gratitude by giving Him some of our money.

How is the prayer-meeting getting on? Much love and many, many kisses, from

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

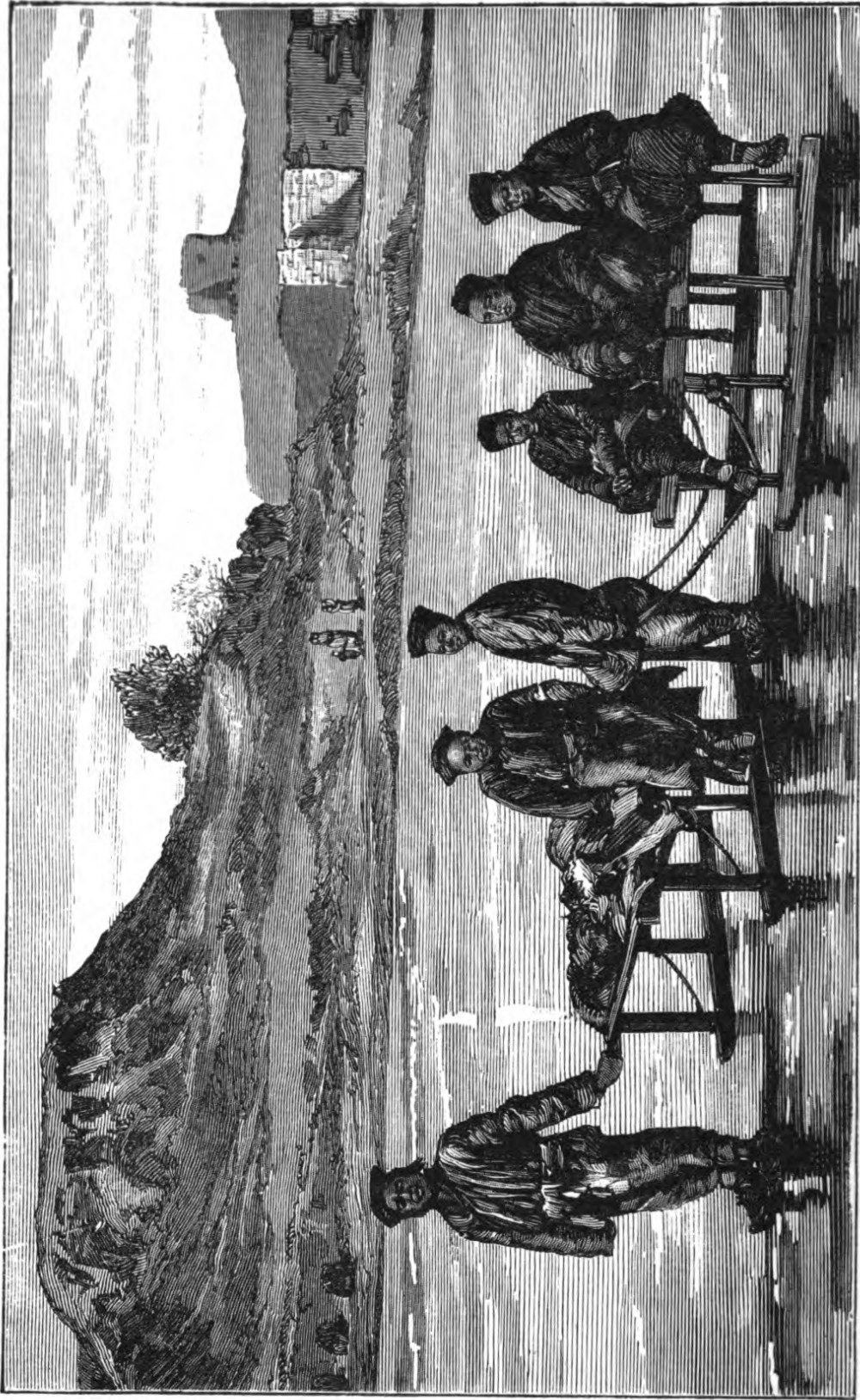
Mongolia, Monday, December 8, 1890.

MY DEAR SONS,

Your welcome letters of September 18 and 21 reached me here on December 5. I was glad of all your good news.

I had a good month's work at Ch'ao Yang in November. We baptized a woman and a child, and there are some more learners.

So you are back at your lessons again? I hope you thanked very heartily and politely all the friends



CHINESE SLEDGES.

who were kind to you during the holidays. Stick into your lessons well, and do them thoroughly.

May God comfort you when you are sad, and still bless you when you are glad!

Never do anything you would not like Jesus to know. If He would not like it, don't do it. Be honourable and upright in everything—play, lessons, examinations, etc.

Mr. Parker and Dr. Smith arrived here three days ago. It is pleasant to have company. The other day I saw a herd-boy carrying home from the field a newly born kid. Its mother was following it. Every little while he put the kid down and let the mother fondle it. It was so pretty. With many prayers,

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, January 17, 1891.

MY DEAR SONS,

Taking a walk to-day I stood for a little seeing some Chinese boys sliding. They were so like home boys. Some of them little fellows, putting their mouths into a determined shape, and holding their legs boldly, went sliding along in their wadded trousers, one after the other, in a great hurry. There were tumbles-down, too, and collisions not a few. The fun went on furiously, till an angry man came

up and shouted, 'Why don't you bring the tea? Sliding away there like that!' Two lads at once went away to get their teapots filled, and I came away. How like are boys all the world over! They might just have been you two.

Just before Mr. Gilmour left England, in 1890, he placed his boys at the School for the Sons of Missionaries, at Blackheath. This fact explains some of the references in the letters given in this chapter. In August, 1890, Dr. Smith's wife died. She was very well known to many friends of the London Missionary Society, both in England and Australia, as Miss Jessie Philip. The shock of this loss affected Dr. Smith's health so much that he had to return to England for rest and change.

February 1.

To-day two men came from a distance to learn about our religion, and another repeated his Catechism as a candidate for baptism. Dr. Smith is going home. Perhaps he will call and see you some time.

Mongolia, February 11, 1891.

MY DEAR SONS,

This mail was sent off on February 2. The messenger returned the same day, saying he could not go—there were robbers on the road. He is to go again to-morrow.

Two days ago I took a long walk and met a black dog behaving very curiously. I was afraid he was mad. After a little I saw he was watching something, and further on I saw what I took to be a wolf. I turned away back home, and the wolf did not come after me.

It is Chinese New Year time here now, and everybody has a holiday. Dr. Smith is unwell, and left to-day for England. He says he'll come to see you. Much love to you both, my dear sons. Why do not your photos come?

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, February 27, 1891.

MY DEAR SONS,

I send you some stamps. Please divide them between you.

You will notice that the envelope is one of your own. It has come to Mongolia and gone home again, more than twenty thousand miles. It is a traveller.

The Chinese new year is just over here now. This is the nineteenth day of the first month. People have been idle, and are so still. These last few days more people come about. Two or three days ago there was a display of lanterns at night. The people here thought it fine. Compared with

Peking, it was not much. Do you remember the fireworks in Peking? The Crystal Palace fireworks are very fine. Have you seen them? I have not seen them.

I am glad that the cold weather is passed here at last. With Mr. Parker here it was not lonely.

March 2.

I am, perhaps, going to Tientsin in May. If so, I'll be photographed and send you copies. I hope that next Christmas you may be in Scotland. *Do* be good diligent lads. Read useful books, but not foolish or bad books. Go to the Salvation Army meetings when you have an opportunity. Read your Bible. Pray about all things. Pray for me here. I often pray for you. The great thing is to know Jesus, and have Him as a Friend. I send you some stamps.

Your loving father,
JAMES GILMOUR.

Mongolia, March 16, 1891.

MY DEAR SONS,

You speak of having a holiday because six of the former boys passed the B.A. examinations. I wonder if either of you will ever give the boys a holiday by passing such examinations! I wonder what you are going to be!

Well, well, don't worry or trouble yourself about

that. Just do earnestly, faithfully, and well, as unto Christ, and not only as to men, your daily lessons, and all your learning, and the rest will be cared for you and appointed of God for you when the time comes.

Two days ago I took a walk, and came upon the body of a small infant cast out naked. The Chinese, when a child dies, think there is an evil spirit in the case, which will come back and trouble them if they bury the child in the family graveyard. So they cast out the little body for the dogs and pigs to eat. I have a great many patients here, and we have prayers and hymn-singing every evening with the Christians. One man, a Chinaman, is to be baptized on Sunday. There are other three candidates, but they may perhaps have to wait a little, or perhaps they may turn back. Some do turn back.

Did I tell you about Parker's dog in my last letter? It is a young dog. The other day it had been doing something wrong in a shop in front of our inn. I saw a man carrying about a broken dish to let it see it. The dog looked so frightened. It ran away. Then it came into the inn and skulked away. I spoke to it. It was so pleased, but at once left me and went away to stand behind a large stone trough, and kept looking under it towards the gate to see if the man was coming. The dog could see the gate, but no one at the gate could see it. Then it went away

and lay down where it could see and not be seen. Cunning dog, wasn't he? One day he stole such a lot of nice food belonging to Mr. Parker's boy. It was in a basin. The dog ate it all up. The boy brought in the empty basin, put it down in the middle of the floor, and pointed it out to Mr. Parker. Mr. Parker could not but laugh.

With many prayers for you, my dear sons, and hoping you will have happy Easter, summer, and Christmas holidays, believe me,

Your affectionate father,

JAMES GILMOUR.

March 20.

Letters come, but no news from you. Much love to you.

J. G.



GROUP OF CHINESE BIBLE-WOMEN.

CHAPTER VI

LAST DAYS

THE letters given at the end of the last chapter show no signs of failing power on Mr. Gilmour's part. He was in good health. He was happy in his fellow-worker, Mr. Parker. At each of the more important centres of work—Ch'ao Yang and T'a ssŭ Kow—the number of converts, though small, was steadily increasing. He was very happy for the most part in his Christian life. He felt that Jesus was very near to him, very precious in the way He was helping and blessing him. And Jesus in mercy keeps back from us all knowledge of the future. We do not know what a day will bring forth, and a great blessing to us it is that we do not know. And Mr. Gilmour did not know that exactly two months after he sent the message to his boys on March 20, 'Much love to you,' he would be lying upon his death-bed, with only a few hours of life. Yet so was it ordered in God's good providence. Just when he seemed most needed, and just when his work began to

promise greater success, God called him home. It is very likely that, had he known, his life would have been much the same as it was. He lived in such constant fellowship with Jesus that, although the knowledge would have made him anxious for his loved ones and the friends he was to leave, it could hardly have made him more prayerful, more faithful, more holy.

But God did not allow him to look through the thick veil that hides coming events from us. He went happily and hopefully about his work. We have already looked at the picture of him at work, drawn by Dr. Smith. Here is one drawn by Mr. Parker, the last friend to be with him in Mongolia—

‘On arriving at T’a ssü Kow, we found Gilmour very well indeed ; looking better than he did when I saw him in England. He was jubilant over our coming, and it has been a great source of happiness to me to know that God’s sending me here has up till now given happiness and comfort to one of His faithful servants. I have had a slight taste of being left alone, and I must confess Gilmour has had something to endure during the last few years.

‘We are living in hired rooms of an inn. Gilmour is not in this courtyard. I have been alone here with my Chinese boy for the last five weeks (Dr. Smith being in Ch’ao Yang until a few days ago). I have been unable to get a proper teacher at pre-

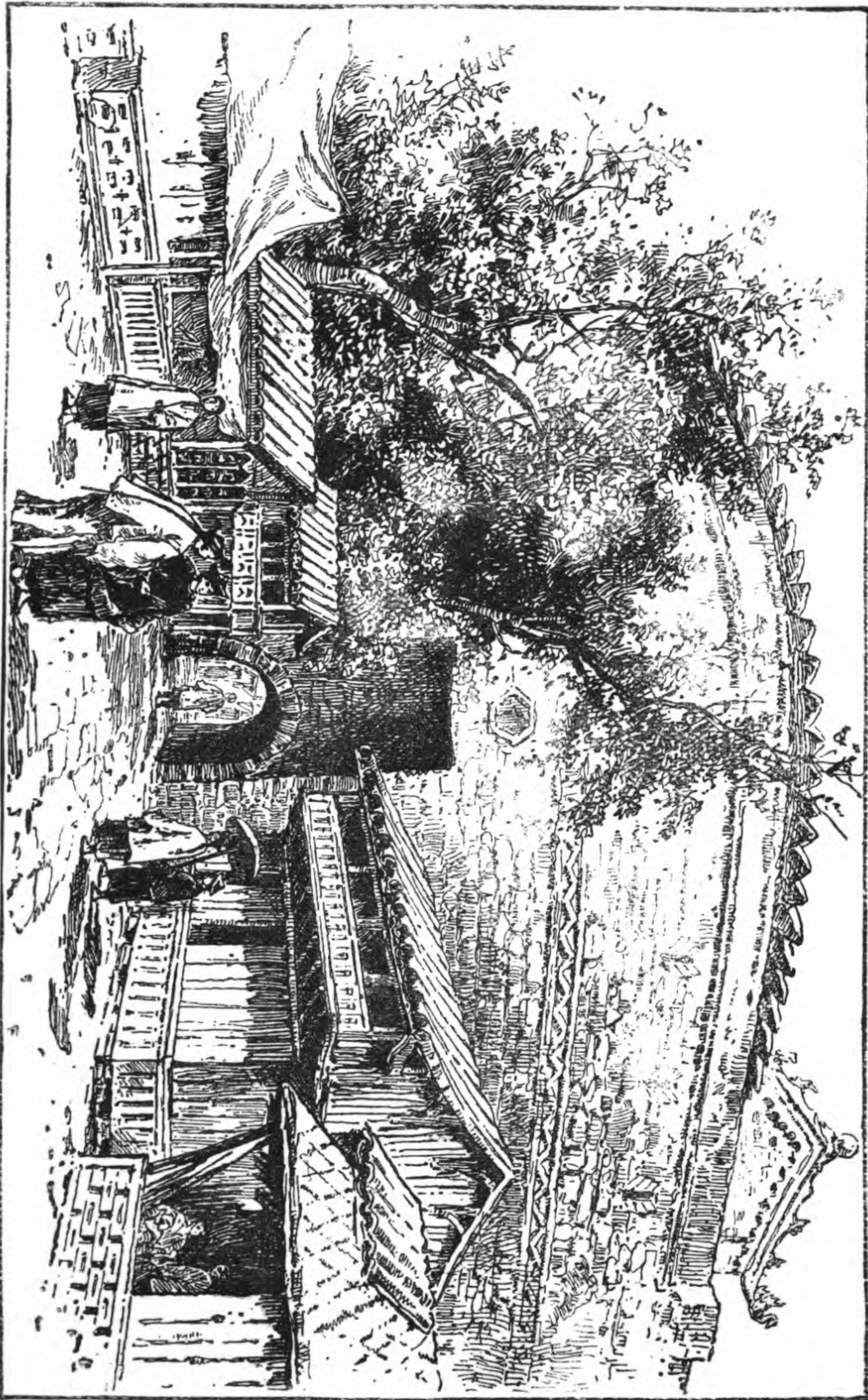
sent. Gilmour's student has been teaching me. He speaks distinctly. With him I have made very fair progress. I hope in a few days to secure a proper teacher.

'Another thing which has taught me a good amount of the Chinese I know is having to give orders to my Chinese boy in housekeeping generally. I am thankful to God for past experiences in my life, though they were rather rough; for here I find they come in very usefully. I had to teach my boy how to cook and do things generally. It was rather an amusing piece of work, seeing that I knew nothing of the language. Each order I gave him was a comedy in two or three acts, all played out in dumb-show. In telling him what I wished purchased I was obliged to imitate sounds which are peculiar to certain beasts and birds, which, when he understood, he announced that fact by opening wide his eyes and emitting a loud "Ah!" which was generally followed by the name of the thing indicated bellowed forth at the top of his voice, as if I were deaf. Also he, in turn, when he had anything to tell me, always stood in the centre of the room and went through a whole performance. On one occasion, when he wished to tell me that a certain dog had stolen the day's meat, the performance was so amusing that, when he had got through, I asked him what he was trying to say, in order that I might once more see the fun.

‘Forgive me for taking up your time with such frivolous things. But I have picked up much of the language in that way, although at the cost of being grimed with soot and burning my fingers. All that now is past, and the boy is very useful, and, although now a heathen, I am hoping that by my influence he may be led to know the love of Jesus Christ. I am very glad that I came straight out here. I am sure I shall learn the language (of the *people*, perhaps *not* of the *books*) better than in the frontier cities. I am constantly forced to try and speak. Every day I have some visitors here whom I must try and entertain. I feel stupid at times with them, and perhaps they think I am ; but, nevertheless, each day’s experience is adding to my vocabulary. And when so learnt, I know that people will understand me when I speak.

‘Gilmour is doing a valuable work. Every day he goes to the street and sets out his table with his boxes of medicines and books. He has three narrow benches, on one of which he sits, the other two being for his patients. Of the latter he has any amount, coming with all the ills to which humanity is heir. It is a busy street, not of the best repute, for it is where all the traders in second-hand clothes and dealers in marine stores spread out their wares.

‘For some weeks I went out at a certain hour to take care of Gilmour’s stand while he went and got



ENTRANCE TO A CHINESE TOWN.

a "refresher" in the shape of some indigestible pudding made of millet-flour, with beans for plums. He generally left me with a patient or two requiring some lotion in the eye or some wound to dress. Then I, being a new-comer and a typical "foreign devil" (being red of hair and in complexion), always brought a large following down the street with me, and attracted a great crowd round the stand. At first it was not pleasant to sit there and be stared at without being able to speak to them; but after a while I got very interested in the different faces that came round. On one occasion I noticed the crowd eagerly discussing something among themselves, giving me a scrutinizing look now and then. Now and again one would turn to his fellow and rub his finger across his upper lip, as if he was feeling for his moustache. I had only been here a week or so then, and knew very little of the language; but I listened attentively, and at last I heard them speaking the Chinese numerals, and then it all dawned upon me that they were inquiring about and discussing my age; so I up with my fingers, indicating the years of my pilgrimage. I never saw a crowd so amused. "Ah, ah!" they said, and opened their eyes, highly delighted that I was able to tell them what they wanted to know. Then I had my turn, and, pointing to a man here and there in the crowd, I used what little of Chinese I had in guessing their ages.

‘But the sights of misery, suffering, and wretchedness which gather round Gilmour’s stand are simply appalling. His work seems to me to come nearest to Christ’s own way of blessing men. Healing them of their wounds, giving comfort in sickness, and at the same time telling them the gospel of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ. One day that I went I found Gilmour tying a bandage on a poor beggar’s knee. The beggar was a boy about sixteen years of age, entirely naked, with the exception of a piece of sacking for a loin-cloth. He had been creeping about, almost frozen with cold, and a dog (who, no doubt, thought he was simply an animated bone) had attacked him.

‘The people here are desperately poor, and the misery and suffering one sees crawling through the streets every day is heart-rending. I have not a doubt that I am in a real mission field, and thank God that He has given me the opportunity to do something towards alleviating some of this misery.’

On May 22, 1891, the writer had just entered the train at Ludgate Hill, when, on opening an evening paper, his eye caught the statement that James Gilmour had died at Tientsin, on May 21. The shock of such unexpected tidings was very great. It was not only the loss of an old and beloved friend. It was the feeling that no man could carry on his work. This feeling was natural, but none the less

wanting in faith. No worker, however capable, is essential in God's service. He can, and He does, as in the case of Mongolia, raise up others to take the place of those workers whom He calls to the perfect life of heaven. But men like Mr. Gilmour leave gaps that can only be filled by God Himself.

In April, 1891, it fell to Mr. Gilmour's lot to act as chairman at the annual meetings of the North China District Committee of the London Missionary Society. They were to be held in Tientsin, and Mr. Gilmour had to travel thither—a long journey. Some weeks after the news of his death had been flashed by telegraph over the world, the account of his journey, written by himself, reached England through the slower-travelling post.

'Arrived here yesterday. The world keeps shrinking. Left T'a ssü Kow Monday, 8 a.m. Tuesday noon dined in a border Mongol village, in a Mongol's inn, served by a Mongol waiter, in presence of a number of Mongols. Got to London Missionary Society's compound, Tientsin, Saturday, 5 p.m. Our head-quarters are just five days from the extended railway. Am in A 1 health, everybody says so here, and that truly. Meantime am in clover, physically and spiritually.'

The same mail brought to Mrs. Lovett a letter, probably the last long letter he ever wrote, addressed to the members of a ladies' working society who had

been helping his work. We quote part of it because it is the last description of his work penned by Mr. Gilmour, and in the hope that some of the girls who read this book may listen to his appeal, and go out to be medical missionaries among the suffering and ignorant women in the East.

‘I am just back from a month’s raid into Ch’ao Yang. Had a fine time. Good weather and plenty of work in the market-place. Baptized four adults, three being women—all Chinese. It is the day of small things truly, but I am not a little encouraged, over the women especially. That now makes four Christian families in Ch’ao Yang or its immediate neighbourhood. The two wives baptized this time have Christian husbands. It has all along been our prayer that the unsaved relatives of the saved might be saved.

‘Mrs. Chu’s husband was baptized a couple of years ago. She consented to his taking their two children to me to be baptized, but she herself would have nothing to do with Christianity or Christ. This time she got over her difficulties. I was much pleased, especially as she had annoyed her husband a good deal last year about his having been beaten about his Christianity. She also had her little child baptized. Pray that God may keep and help them in all the many complications that will arise on account of their Christianity, living as they do in

a composite family, the ruling powers of which are heathen.

‘Mrs. Ning is a model wife. They are poor. Her husband cannot dress in good clothes, but is always as neat as a virtuous wife, skilful with her needle, can make him. She mends so neatly. I once discarded a vest (Chinese) and gave it to her husband. He took it home, and later on I saw him swelling about in it quite like a neat old gentleman, though I was almost ashamed to give it him.

‘They have had family worship in their home for a year or two—they say. We went to baptize her. It was such a small, poor house, but so very nice inside. Mother and grown daughters and little girl, with father and grown son, all sleep on a little brick platform, hardly big enough for me—one man. She and the grown daughter support the family by needlework—making horsehair women’s head-fittings, which the father sells when he has nothing more to do.

‘The son is epileptic and can earn nothing, and is, in addition, a great eater. He is a good man, and a Christian. As we entered, the son and daughter went out. The mother and little daughter were baptized. The father did not wish his big daughter baptized. When she is married she will get a heathen mother-in-law, who will go for her and make her worship idols. So said the father. In a few

days the father came back, saying that out of fear of the coming mother-in-law he had not had his daughter baptized, but that his daughter had pressed him so hard that she was as formidable as the mother-in-law. The daughter says she'll stick to her God, and let them stick to theirs, and so she was baptized. She has a hot time before her. Chinese mothers-in-law are no joke. Pray for the lassie, that: (*a*) she may be steadfast; (*b*) she may be wise; (*c*) she may be gentle in her resistance; (*d*) enabled by God to endure; and that the mother-in-law may be restrained. God can do all things.

'Here, in T'a ssü Kow, two of the Christians have wives very much opposed to Christianity, and give their husbands hot times. Remember the husbands, please, and all such in their shoes, in prayer, and may the darkened women themselves be enlightened! You have no notion how deeply sunk in superstition the women are. Still another Christian has a wife whom he has to allow to worship a weasel, because the woman shows symptoms of being possessed by the beast if she does not worship it!

'The other day a woman came to my stand in the market-place, saying that "Mr. Yellow" troubled her. "Mr. Yellow" turned out to be the weasel, and she firmly believed her sickness was due to the beast.

'We are badly in want of a lady medical man in

this district. Don't you know of one who would do? Are there none of you who could study medicine, and go out as doctors to some of the many needy places? Much was hoped for this district from the late Mrs. Smith, but God took her. Any one who comes here should have good health, and not fear seclusion from foreign company. I would suggest that a couple should come, a medical and a non-medical. There is a house which could be got for such a couple, only I don't see how they could get on without knowing some Chinese. Perhaps some one of the Peking or Tientsin ladies already speaking Chinese would volunteer to be a medical lady's companion. Would that God would stir some of you up! Meantime, thanks for the money. Thanks also for the prayers which I take for granted you let us have. You might also pray for a woman who has a very good, quiet, Christian husband, but herself has such a temper that she cannot in decency take on a Christian profession. Eh, man! eh, man! it is curious that I, a widower, should be left to look after women's souls out here, when lots of women are competing for men's situations and businesses at home. I guess things will come right some day, though I may or may not see it.'

Mr. Gilmour reached Tientsin on April 19, and became the guest of Dr. Roberts, who for the space of a month had been his fellow-worker in Mongolia

and his sister, who kept house for him. To her fell the sad duty of writing to the orphan boys in Scotland, to tell them of their sad loss. And the story of the last days of a noble life cannot be better told than in her simple words.

London Mission, Tientsin, North China, June 6, 1891.

MY DEAR WILLIE AND JIMMIE,

You will wonder who I am that call you by your names and yet have never known you. But I think, when you hear that your dear father spent the last five weeks of his life with my brother, Dr. Roberts, and myself, perhaps you will not be sorry to get a few lines from an unknown friend. It is now many weeks since we received a letter from Mr. Gilmour, saying he hoped to be able to attend the annual meetings in Tientsin, and who would take him in? My brother replied at once, saying what a real pleasure it would be if he would stay with us. And so he came, and about a fortnight before the time, of which we were all the more glad. He looked the very picture of health on his arrival, and was in excellent spirits; many remarked how very well and strong he looked.

I remember well the day he arrived; it was a Saturday afternoon. I suggested that he should have some dinner at once; but, thoughtful-like as your father always was, he said, 'No, thank you; I have

already had all I want. I shall not require anything more till your next ordinary meal.'

By-and-by we showed him his room, 'whose windows opened to the sun-rising.' We had made it as pretty and comfortable as we could, and brightened it with freshly cut flowers. The next day I noticed he had taken the table-cloth off his writing-table, and in the evening he handed it to me, saying, if I remember rightly, 'Here, mademoiselle, is your table-cloth. I am afraid of inking it; you had better put it away.' I was grieved, and begged he would use, and ink it too, for the matter of that. But it was no use; not on any account would he spoil my cloth, and therefore would not use it.

He seemed very happy with us, and I think thoroughly appreciated the home-likeness of his surroundings after his lonely life in Mongolia and the dismal rooms of a Chinese inn; and it was such a pleasure to minister to his comforts in every possible way we could think of.

He used to spend his days, as a rule, in the following way. After breakfast he would write letters. At 10.45, after a cup of cocoa, he would go over to the hospital, returning at one o'clock to dinner. This over, he would go back with my brother to see the in-patients. At 4.30 we would all have tea together, after which he would make calls, or go for a walk, or talk over committee

matters with Mr. Lees or Mr. Bryson. Many evenings he would be invited out, or would be at a meeting, or would spend it quietly at home, and so the time went by till meetings began. Then the whole day till four p.m. was spent in committee, and at six Mr. Gilmour had a Bible-class for an hour with the Chinese preachers who had come to attend some of the meetings. These were nearly over when your dear father began to complain of feeling done up, and of having fever. The following Sunday he was in bed; this was only eleven days before he died. On Monday, however, he was better and up, and was able to be with us all day, and took the Communion with us all in the evening; then we chatted together for some time and sang hymns, amongst others, 'God be with you till we meet again!' No. 494 in Sankey's *Songs and Solos*.

In this connection let me tell you some of Mr. Gilmour's favourite hymns in the book just mentioned; amongst these were Nos. 494, 535, 150, 328. I dare say you would like to learn them and sing them for his sake.

Your dear father was only in bed ten days before the end came, and all this time he spoke but little. He was too feverish and ill to want to talk or to listen; he just lay quietly bearing his sickness, with remarkable patience. One day, observing he was a little restless, I went to his bedside and asked him if

he wanted anything. 'No, nothing,' was his reply; 'only that the Lord would deliver me out of this distress.'

The last few days his mind was not clear, but all his wanderings were about his work. It was the last day but one of his life he was more restless than usual, trying all the time to rouse himself as if for a journey, when he looked up and said, 'Where are we going?' 'To heaven,' I answered, 'to see the Lord.' 'No,' he replied; 'that is not the address.' 'Yes, it is, Mr. Gilmour,' I said again; 'we are going to heaven. Would you not like to go and see the Lord Jesus?' Then he seemed to take in the meaning of my words, and he reverently bowed his head in assent, his lips quivered, and his eyes filled with tears; and he was quieted, like a weary child who has lost his way, and finds on inquiry that only a few more steps and he will be at rest and at 'home.'

The next day, his last, was still more restless. At one time he seemed to be addressing an audience, and earnestly gesticulating with his hands, and with as much force as he could command, he said, 'We are not spending the time as we should; we ought to be waiting on God in prayer for blessing on the work He has given us to do. I would like to make a rattling speech—but I cannot—I am very ill—and can only say these few words.' And then he nodded

his head and waved his hand, as if in farewell to his listeners.

It was seven o'clock in the evening when my brother saw the end was not far off, and at once we sent for all the other members of the mission, that all might watch with him in this last solemn hour. He was unconscious the whole time, and his breathing laboured. The two doctors battled for an hour and a half to keep off death's fatal grasp, but to no purpose; the Lord wanted His faithful worker, and we could not keep him, though we wanted him much, and knew that Willie and Jimmie in England needed him more.

Gradually the breathing became quieter and quieter, till at last, about 9.30, he just closed his eyes and 'fell asleep,' with the peace of Heaven resting on his face.

And now, dear boys, my letter is finished. I have no words of comfort to send you; your loss is irreparable. God only, the Father of the fatherless, can comfort your young hearts; and we know He has promised to supply all our needs by Jesus Christ. Your father can no longer pray for you on earth, nor be with you again as once he was, but you still have Jesus. Your dear father followed Christ fully. Will you, Willie and Jimmie, do the same? And if you want to be like him, you must love the Bible and make it your guide-book, and obey it.

I should very much like to get a letter from each of you, but don't write unless you want to. This letter in itself does not require an answer. The least I could do for you both was to let you have a few particulars, sad as they will be to read.

I am, dear boys,

Yours affectionately,

MARY ROBERTS.

The funeral of Mr. Gilmour took place towards evening on May 23, 1891. It was a lovely afternoon, and the sun, shining brightly, lent additional force to the words of John Bunyan which were printed upon the simple sheet containing the hymn to be sung at the grave: 'The pilgrim they laid in an upper chamber whose window opened towards the sun-rising.' The coffin was borne to the grave by two relays of bearers; the first consisted of three European and three native preachers; the second, on the one side, of the Rev. S. E. Meech, his brother-in-law; the Rev. J. Parker, his colleague, and Dr. Roberts; and on the other Liu, his faithful Chinese preacher and helper; Chang, the tutor of the theological class at Tientsin; and Hsi, his courier, a native of T'a ssü Kow. His last resting-place immediately adjoins that of his dearly loved friend, Dr. Mackenzie, and the service at the grave was conducted by the Rev. Jonathan Lees and the Rev. J. Parker. Chang offered prayer, and a farewell hymn was sung.

'Sleep on, beloved, sleep, and take thy rest;
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast;
We love thee well; but Jesus loves thee best—
Good night! Good night! Good night!

Until the shadows from this earth are cast;
Until He gathers in His sheaves at last;
Until the twilight gloom be overpast—
Good night! Good night! Good night!

Until we meet again before His throne,
Clothed in the spotless robe He gives His own,
Until we know even as we are known—
Good night! Good night! Good night!

Little Chinese boys who had known and loved Mr. Gilmour came forward and threw handfuls of flowers into his grave, loving hands laid upon the coffin a wreath of white blossoms on behalf of the now orphaned boys far away, and the simple but beautiful service was closed by a spontaneous act on the part of the Chinese converts present. Pressing near the grave of him whose heart loved China and the Chinese with a fervour and an enthusiasm that may have been equalled, but certainly have never been surpassed, they sang in their own tongue the hymn beginning, 'In the Christian's home in glory.'

Many pages of this book might be filled with what good men and women have written and said in praise of Mr. Gilmour. His friends have allowed the beautiful letters already given in this volume to be printed, in the hope that many boys and girls may by them be

led to give their hearts to Jesus, and their lives to the service and help of those who do not know about Him and His love. They, rather than what others say about him, reveal the true glory of his life. But in ending our story of a very wonderful life, we will quote two only. Mr. Parker, less than a month after Mr. Gilmour's death, wrote the following letter to the orphaned boys :—

Mongolia, June 16, 1891.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,

I enclose a Chinese letter for you, sent by the Christians at Ch'ao Yang. These are men who learnt about Jesus from your father's lips, and were led to trust in Christ for salvation.

They loved your father dearly, and some of them, though grown-up men, cried like children when they heard your father was dead.

Mr. Meech will enclose a translation for you. If you can write an answer back, and send it to Mr. Meech, he will have it written in Chinese, and I will read it to them. They would be so pleased.

Now, with my kindest regards, remember me as

Your sincere friend,

JNO. PARKER.

TRANSLATION OF CHINESE LETTER.

We respectfully inquire for the peace and happiness of your excellencies, our brothers Gilmour, also for

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the peace of your whole school. In the first place, Pastor Gilmour, in his preaching and doctoring at Ch'ao Yang, north of the Pass, truly loved others as himself, was considerate and humble, and had the likeness of [our] Saviour Jesus. Not only the Christians thank him without end, but even those outside the Church (the heathen) bless him without limit. We who through Pastor Gilmour have obtained the doctrine of the second birth, and received the grace of Jesus, had hoped with Mr. Gilmour to have assembled on the earth until our heads were white, and in the future life to have gone with him to heaven. Little did we think we should have been so unhappy. He has already gone to the Lord. We certainly know he is in the presence of the Lord, not only praying for us, but also for you, our brothers.

We pray you, when you see this letter, not to grieve beyond measure. We hope that you will study with increased ardour, so as to obtain the heavenly wisdom, like Solomon, and that afterwards you may come to China, to this Ch'ao Yang, to preach the gospel widely. As the father did may the sons follow, is our earnest desire.

Signed by the Ch'ao Yang Christians.

LIU MAO LIN

(*preacher*).

LIU I (*your father's*
servant).

CHANG WAN CH'UAN.

CHANG MAO CHI.

CHANG KUEI.

NING KUANG CHEN.

P'ANG TIEN K'UEI. CHIANG SHENG.
 SUNG KANG. LIU CHO.
 WANG SHENG. WANG HUI HSIEN.
 CH'U WEN YUAN. T'IENTE CH'UN.
 NING FU TUNG. HU TE.
 CHANG CHEN.

P.S.—My dear boys, I went up to Ch'ao Yang, and brought the letter back with me. But since my return three weeks ago, I have been ill, so your letter had to wait.

May God bless you both, and may the wishes of the Chinese for you be answered.

Your loving uncle,

S. EVANS MEECH.

The Rev. G. Owen, of Peking, who knew Mr. Gilmour intimately, and worked side by side with him for years, thus sums up his life—

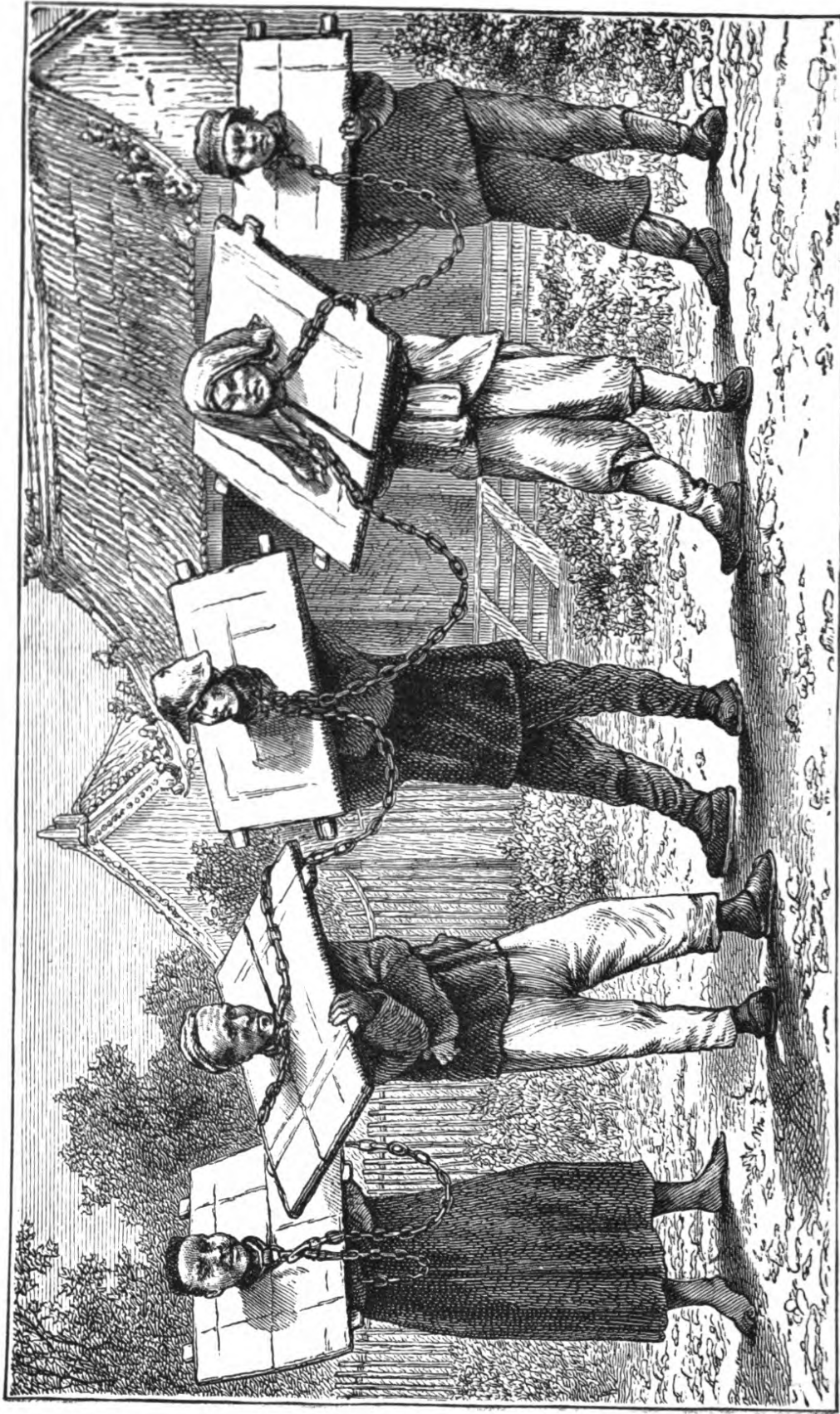
'He spared himself in nothing, but gave himself wholly to God. He kept nothing back. All was laid upon the altar. I doubt if even St. Paul endured more for Christ than did James Gilmour. I doubt, too, if Christ ever received from human hands or human heart more loving, devoted service.

'If any one asks, "Would it not have been better if Mr. Gilmour had taken more care of himself and lived longer?" I would answer, "I don't know.

His life was beautiful, and I would not alter it if I could. A few years of such service as he gave Christ are worth a hundred years of humdrum toil. We need the inspiration of such a life as his. Heaven, too, is the richer for such a man and such a life. The pearly gates opened wide, I have no doubt, to receive him. Angels and men gave him glad welcome, and what a smile would light up the Saviour's face as He received His faithful servant home !”

‘ And he being dead, yet speaketh. He says, “ Be faithful, work hard, for the night cometh when no man can work. Be earnest, for life is brief ; be ready, for life is uncertain.” But why did God call him away in the midst o life and work ? I don't know. Possibly work here is not of such importance as we think. Or there is more important service elsewhere waiting for such men as Mr. Gilmour. He has been faithful over a few things ; he has been made ruler over many things, and has entered into the joy of his Lord.’





CHINESE PRISONERS.

CHAPTER VII

PEN-PICTURES FOR CHILDREN, BY MR. GILMOUR

ON p. 18 there is a reference to the fact that early in life Mr. Gilmour was led to think about writing short articles and stories for children. During the greater part of his life in China he sent home to his friends, and he published in the *London Missionary Chronicle* and *Juvenile*, the *Sunday at Home*, the *Tract Magazine*, and other periodicals, many short papers. A few of these are brought together in this chapter as specimens of the power which he possessed.

I.

THE TRAVELLING TOY-SELLER.

‘Bong—Bong—Bong!’ Nearer and nearer it slowly comes, while children run shouting to their nurses, and try to drag them off to the gate, hurrying and excited, lest they should be too late, and the toy-seller should go past. Should he go past, the little

ones have not very long to wait till 'Bong—Bong—Bong!' another toyman is heard coming slowly along the lane, his gong sounding nearer and nearer, till he sets his burden down opposite the gate. What follows is well represented in the picture. The



CHINESE CHILDREN BUYING TOYS.

children gather eagerly round the tempting display of toys that cover the portable stall; parents and nurses look on with seeming indifference, but really a good deal interested in the proceedings; and the toy-seller stands by, watching his customers as they handle his goods, and ready to make a sale.

His wares are numerous and cheap. Carts fitted with a drum to make them rattle as they run, statues,

idols, figures of animals, baskets of doves, vases of flowers, miniature cages with miniature birds, stone balls for kicking with the feet, and a bewildering profusion of all sorts of toys, gaudy with colours, dazzle the eyes of the children, and make them uncertain as to what to buy, from the very multitude of things offered for their choice. Then, too, there is another distraction, for not only are there toys, but also sweets of many kinds, all wonderfully cheap; and sometimes a child, after buying a toy and possessing it for a minute or two, hands it back, saying he wants to change it for eatables. The toy-seller knows his customers and his business, and consents to the exchange; and, after effecting one or two sales, amounting in value to the twelfth or the sixth of a penny each, shoulders his travelling shop and stock-in-trade, and goes slowly along the street, 'Bong—Bong—Bonging' at his gong, till, meeting with more customers, he makes a few more sales at the same low rates.

The number of itinerant toy-sellers on the streets of Peking is great. It is almost impossible to go along any lane of the city and not meet one such dealer, and in some of the lanes several may be met. This proves one thing—that the Chinese are fond of children and indulgent to them. Were it not so, an army of men would not find it possible to support themselves by selling toys and sweets. Peking

fathers, too, may often be seen carrying about and caring for their children ; so that there is no lack of proof that the Chinese have natural affection. And yet, when a child dies, no one cares to know where it is buried. The body is made up as a bundle and placed in the dead-cart, which, drawn by a great and slow-moving ox, may be seen making its daily progress along the great street, taking away the bodies of infants to indiscriminate and unknown sepulture somewhere outside the city. Sometimes, too, when a child dies, it is placed in a rude coffin, which is given to a beggar, who slings it from his shoulder by a cord, and, carrying it under his arm, takes it outside the city and buries it wherever it may suit him. To children alive and well the Chinese are kind enough : why is it that they are so callous to the dead ? It is simply that they know nothing of a future life, where they may hope to meet them. When a Chinaman's child dies, he does not say he has buried it ; he says he has 'thrown it away.' To his idea, it is not 'gone before,' but 'lost ;' his connection with it is severed for ever, and no ray of hope lightens his thoughts of the little one.

Compare with this the love expended by Christians on the body of a dead child—the careful dressing of the little limbs, the neatly furnished coffin, the sympathy of friends, the funeral, the little tombstone with its touching inscription, the belief that the little

spirit has left us to go to a better place, where it has even more loving care than we could bestow on it ; and that, nourished amid every circumstance of good, our loved one is 'gone before,' and will welcome us when we come to the land where suffering and parting are no more. Compare all this faith and hope with the darkness and despair of the Chinaman over his dead children, and you will have one view of the difference between Christianity and heathenism.

Naturally, the Chinese are very fond of children, and they bestow on them much kindly attention, which is often remarked by foreigners. What a pity that heathenism should throw such gloom over infant graves, and bring despair and hardness into the hearts of parents in those afflictions which, when looked at in the light of the gospel, shine with a bright hope, and are often the means of bringing to gentleness and love hearts which seem impossible to be softened by anything else !

Looking at the difference between the heathen and Christian ideas of children, it is possible to realize the importance of the doctrine which Christ taught when, interrupting His work, He gave audience to mothers, laid His hands on their little ones, blessed them, and said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

II.

IS THERE A BRIDGE OR NOT?

A terrible storm was blowing from the north-east. The cold was intolerable. We were benumbed. The wind howled so that we could with difficulty hear each other speak. Some miles ahead was an inn with a friendly innkeeper ; if we could only reach that, we could have warmth, shelter, food, and comfort. But between us and the inn was a river to be crossed. Just at that season of the year this river is so difficult to cross that to avoid it we had made a long *détour* the day before. But drift-ice had swept away part of a bridge, made our *détour* of the day before of no use, and thrown us back on the old route, bringing us face to face with the dreaded river. It was not a pleasant prospect, the crossing of that river ; and the strange thing about it was, we could get no definite, reliable information about it as to whether there was a bridge or not. Some said there was a bridge, some said there was no bridge. It was perplexing. At last the town in which was the friendly inn on the other side of the river appeared in view, and the question was—Would we be able to cross and get into good quarters, or would we have to turn back baffled ?

Questioning people we met did not go far to solve the difficulty; their contradictory answers only increased the perplexity. At last we met a cart. Eagerly we questioned the men with it. 'Yes, they had come from where we wanted to go to, had crossed the river in question, and there *was* a bridge.' That seemed to settle the thing. But we met three men, and they declared that they had gone to the river-brink to cross, had found no bridge, and, being unable to cross, were returning baffled to their inn to wait till the storm should have blown over. Whom were we to believe? Why should there be such contradictory reports on such a question as whether a river immediately ahead of us had a bridge over it or not?

An old resident near the place, when appealed to, settled the question by saying that both reports were true as far as they went, but both were incomplete. The carter was right in saying he had crossed the river by the bridge, and the foot-passengers only told the truth when they said they came to the river-brink and were stopped by the unbridged flood. The deep part of the river had a bridge, but the flood had gone beyond the end of the bridge and made a broad icy stream which foot-passengers might well hesitate to ford on such a cold, stormy day. Arriving at the river, we found this was the correct statement of the case. There *was* a bridge over the deepest part of the stream, but it did not span the whole stream, and

the seeming contradiction arose from the fact that the statements were incomplete.

There are a number of things connected with the river of death which lies ahead of us, and the country beyond, on which the information we can gather seems contradictory. We eagerly scan and question, and sometimes it seems that the more we question the deeper we seem to get involved in uncertainty and contradiction. But the explanation is very simple. Our information is not complete. It is all right as far as it goes, but it only goes part of the way. When we get the full statement the seeming contradiction will disappear. 'Now we know in part, then we shall know even as we are known.'

III.

THE SHALLOW WELL.

A friend had been showing me round his garden. It was a fruit-garden, and, being in China, depended a good deal on irrigation. Going up to his well, I found a little mat shed set up near it, and a number of workmen at breakfast. The fire in a little portable forge close by had just gone out, and a number of great steel chisels stood by, newly pointed. A ladder was hung down into the well, and, looking down, I

saw that the water had just been dipped out. The well was about fifteen feet deep—ten feet through the soil and five feet into the live rock. Looking down, I saw a fairly good stream of water pouring in. 'What are you going to do?' 'Deepen the well,' he replied. 'Why?' 'To get more water.' On my saying that there seemed to be enough water, my friend said, 'Yes, when the weather is not dry the water is enough to use, but when a drought comes the water is scarce; and that is just the time when the garden needs it most; when the water supply fails in a drought the garden suffers.'

That well is like many. They are true enough and real enough, only not deep enough. When surrounded with Christian influences, among Christian people, and specially if in a revival-time, when all around are full of Christian life, they too are in good trim. They are not only all right themselves, but join in Christian work, exhorting, cheering, and encouraging others. But when away from Christian influences, among people unfriendly to spiritual things, isolated, and among the worldly, the flow of their spirituality gets low, and, in place of being the source of cheering and encouragement to others, they themselves begin to fail and run dry. What's to be done? Why, just what my host was doing—*dig deeper*.

It is just the want of depth that is the trouble

with many Christians. Their Christianity is all right as far as it goes, but there is not enough of it. It is Christ that they know, but their knowledge is not deep enough. They want to set to work to learn Christ more fully. It may take time and effort. Never mind that; it is worth all the trouble. To have a source of life and joy and holy comfort that no adversity or trial can interrupt or dry up, is worth any trouble it may take to acquire it. To be able to rejoice always, even in tribulation, and to be the channel of streams of the water of life for the salvation of others, is well worth effort and time spent in learning Christ.

God sometimes does with us as was done with that well. A gang of afflictions, adversities, trials, sufferings, and sorrows are gathered round us, not to cause us needless suffering, but to deepen in us the knowledge of Him. We have a bad time for a while, it may be, for no such process is joyful; but when it is all over we are able to say, 'It was good for me to be afflicted.' Then the joy of knowing not only that there will be streams of grace sufficient for us in all circumstances, but that wherever placed there shall flow forth from us rivers of living water to others! If you do not get all out of your religion that you hoped for, the cause is plain and the remedy simple—you have not gone deep enough, and have only to go deeper in the knowledge of God.

IV.

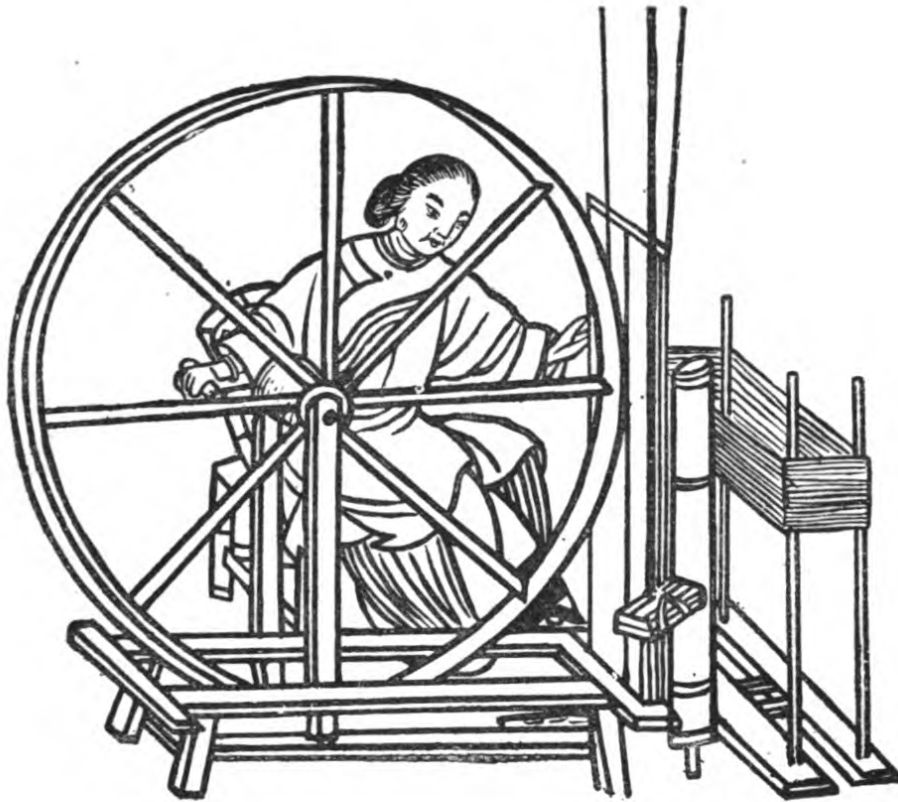
THE MUD TENT

One winter a Mongol had a terrible run of 'bad luck,' as he called it. Things did not go well with him. He lived right in the centre of a little encampment, and while other people got on well enough, his cattle died in considerable numbers. As usual, recourse was had to the lamas, and, as usual, they proceeded to make a fuss and a mystery over what was as plain as daylight. It so happened that the man from whom this unlucky Mongol had inherited all he possessed, was one of the very few Mongols who have enterprise and originality, and had taken it into his head that a mud-built hut would possess some important advantages over a felt tent; so, carrying out his idea, he erected one. It proved quite a success. It was cheaper in construction, much cheaper in maintenance, more comfortable by far and more sanitary than the ordinary felt structure, and, after enjoying much comfort in it for some years, he left it among his other possessions to this heir.

Now, it so happened that this enterprising man had a little enterprise in the region of intellect and religion as well as in things material, and doubtless his intellectual courage was not pleasant to the priests,

who like, and for the most part are accustomed to have, things all their own way. When, therefore, this owner of the inherited mud hut came to them for advice about his bad luck, it is not to be wondered at that, enemies to all progress, they should have pitched upon this eyesore of a mud building, and condemned it. They actually told the unlucky owner that if he wanted to change his luck, he must pull down that mud hut, and put up a felt hut. And pull it down he did. This, however, did not change his luck; nor was it likely to. The source of his ill luck was not the mud tent, but his own idleness. It was not the mud tent that killed his cattle, but the fact that he lay asleep in bed, or sat in his tent eating and drinking, or talking and gambling, or rode about the country seeing his friends and playing the gentleman, while his neighbours were up early and late, watering and tending their cattle, and gathering what food for them they could, and thus successfully tiding them through the winter. His cattle, neglected, got feeble and died, and the lamas, to please him and themselves, and partly too really superstitious, laid all the blame on the mud tent.

It is said that the French courtiers who heard the fugitive King James relate his misfortunes had no difficulty in accounting for his son-in-law being able to secure a throne from which his father-in-law was glad to flee; and half an hour's friendly inter-



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CHINESE SPINNING AND EMBROIDERING.

course with this mud-tent man showed me fully the explanation of his misfortunes. He was lazy, careless, improvident, and self-indulgent, and there was the secret of the whole matter. That his predecessor succeeded where he was failing was no wonder. The old man was an early riser, and a terror to all late risers. When his cough, or the clearing of his throat, was heard throughout the cluster of tents in the still morning, people rose hastily, threw their clothes over them, and hurried out to open the top felt that covered the chimney, and, still in haste, lit their fires, to let the smoke be seen issuing from the top. If they did not, they were sure to hear him shouting, 'What! in bed still? why don't you get up and work?' And though they were in no sense his relatives, he was such a terror to lazy ones, that they were glad to get up and begin the day. His successor! I arrived there one day after a march, and he came out to meet me in his stockings! And yet, in amazement, he asked the lamas to divine for him why he was not successful!

If a man is lazy, don't let him ask why he is unsuccessful. If a man will not use fairly and well the abilities God has given him, don't let him be surprised that he does not get on well. Some men are overmatched in the world, and even with all exertion and over-exertion, life is to them a struggle. But, as a rule, the reward is to the man who has diligence

and perseverance. 'Seest thou a man diligent in business, he shall stand before kings ; he shall not stand before mean men.'

V.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

After hundreds of miles of comparatively dull travelling on the plain, we found ourselves, late one night, at the foot of a high mountain, or range of mountains rather, which we had to cross. Some lesser heights earlier in the journey our camels had managed, with a good deal of difficulty, it is true, but with no assistance beyond what the caravan itself furnished, to struggle over ; but this mountain was not to be so surmounted, and among the outfit of the company the Mongols had not forgotten to bring bricks of tea with which to hire oxen from the inhabitants who live at the foot of the mountain, and make a trade of assisting travellers to cross. Even with the hired oxen it was a hard long struggle in the darkness up the steep rough road, which wound its way through the wood up to the summit. For a time we watched the slow, laborious process, and marked the fire that flew from the iron rims of the wheels as they dashed about among the great stones.

Tired at length of the monotony and many stop-

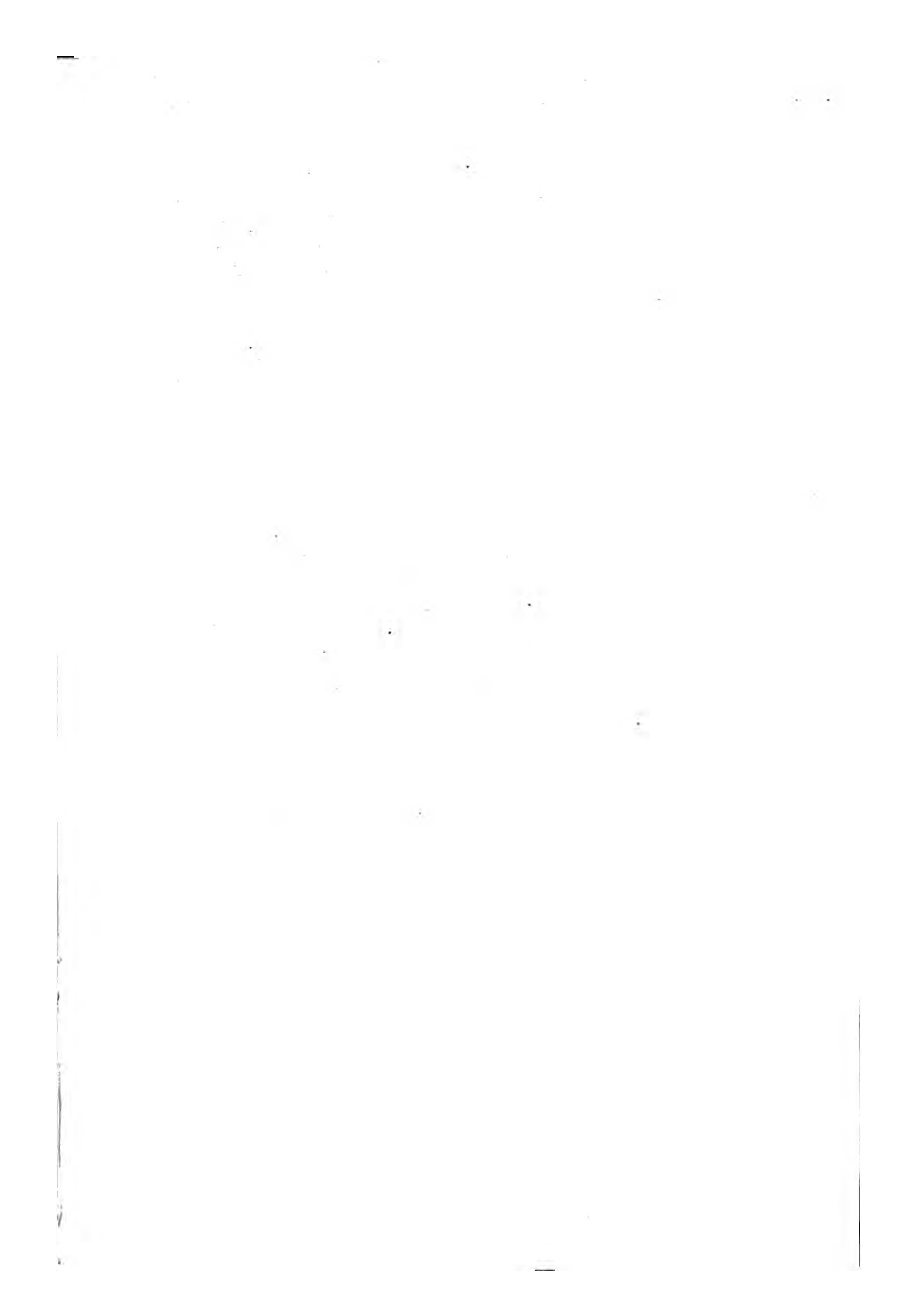
pages and detentions, my fellow-traveller and I slowly drew ahead, and reaching the highest point of the ridge, and looking away to the north, we were entranced by the striking display of northern lights that played on the horizon. By-and-by the caravan came up, and the Mongols soon had their attention fixed on what we were gazing at. But their feelings were very different from ours. What enchanted us with its beauty filled them with terror, and, forgetting everything else, they betook themselves to their prayers and beads, making many repetitions, and adding boughs to the already immense pile of branches raised there and decorated with flags in honour of the local spiritual lord. The Mongols, too, were shocked to find us cheerful and admiring in the presence of what they dreaded as the angry omen of wrath and disaster about to come upon them. 'Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of the heaven, for the heathen *are* dismayed at them,' said the prophet of old, and so it is now. The beautiful aurora is an emblem of terror to them, and our guides were panic-stricken when, about the middle of the night, they gained the summit, and found these coloured lights streaming away in all their beauty in the north.

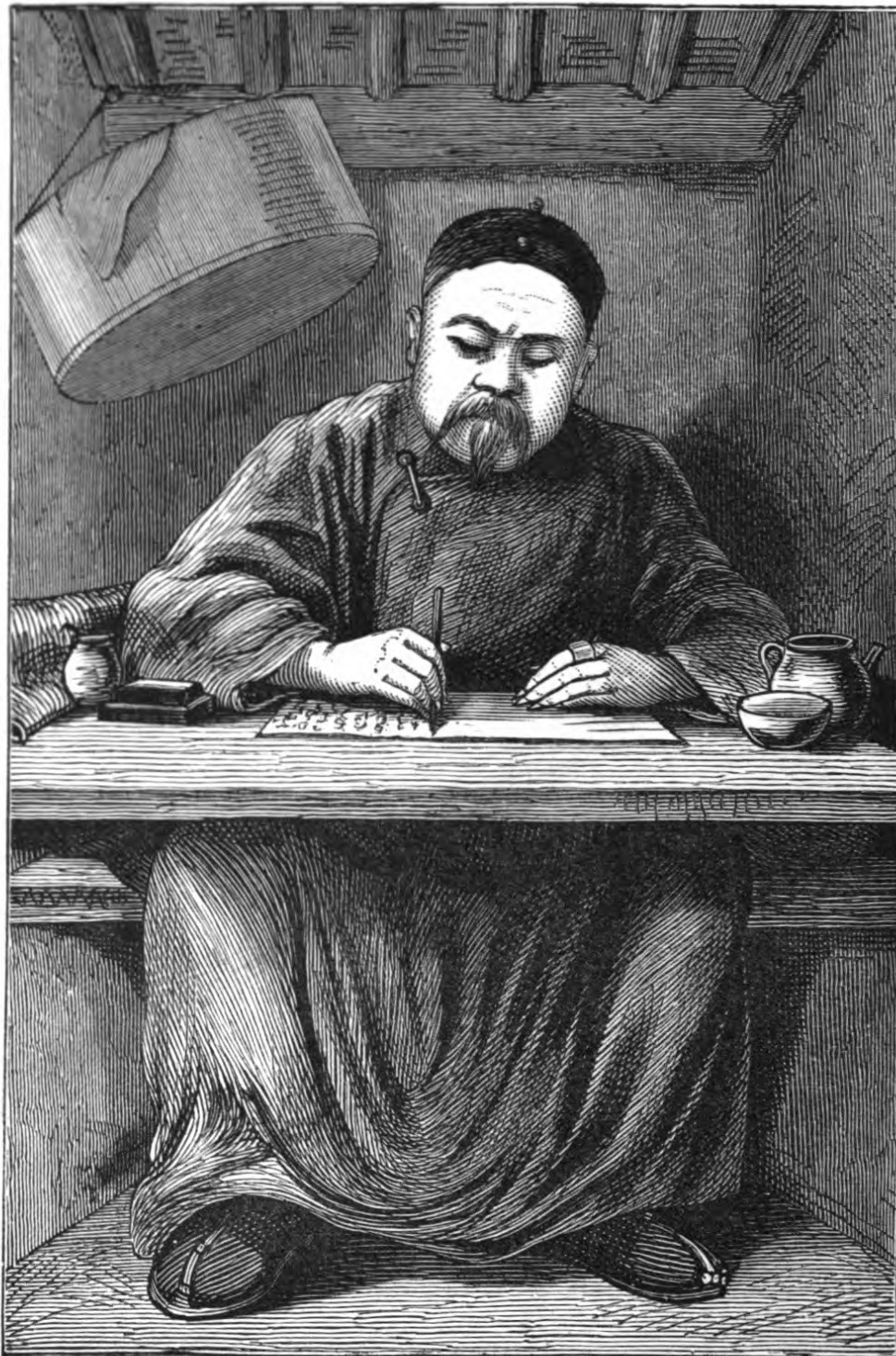
Comets, too, with their 'smoky tails,' as the Mongols say, are greatly feared by the superstitious inhabitants of the plain. They 'bode ill,' they think,

and are looked upon as partly causing the ill ; and it is rather difficult to free them from the idea that there is some connection between the phenomenon and the disaster when every evil, such as drought, deep snow, or cattle plague, is looked upon as the ill luck caused or foreshadowed by the last astronomical phenomenon they beheld, though years may have elapsed since a comet or an aurora was seen.

'Bad luck' is believed in beyond the bounds of Mongolia. One night I was startled at seeing a Russian lady suddenly make a dash at the table and snatch up a candle ; then, as if a narrow escape had been effected, turn to her daughter and reprove her for removing one of the four candles, thus leaving the unlucky number of three on the table ! Yet she was a well-educated lady ! One morning I found a mother, a well-educated British woman, distressed because the portraits of her absent children had been stolen—a fact which she feared boded ill to them. And again I have seen people alarmed at the whining of a dog in the night, or the crowing of a cock at unseasonable hours, or the spilling of salt, as if the things were unlucky or boded disaster or death. And this, too, in a Christian country !

God rules over all, arranges everything ; nothing happens without His permission ; in His keeping we are safe. Why, then, should we be afraid of omens, or alarmed at what people call ill luck ; afraid of





CANDIDATE BEING EXAMINED FOR A PUBLIC OFFICE.

accidents and sounds, as if we were heathen, and had no God to trust to? Heathen know no better, but we should not imitate them. As a missionary, I have sometimes felt myself helped to be patient with the superstitions of the heathen, by noticing how much superstition there is in the minds of people who have been born and bred in a Christian land. Let superstitious fears be lost in loving, full trust of God.

VI.

WHEN SICK, A PRIEST ; WHEN WELL, A LAYMAN.

Calling at a tent, I found the mother and daughter hard at work making robes, which by their colour I knew were meant for a priest. On making inquiries, I found they were for one of the sons of the family whom I had formerly known as a layman. I remarked that hitherto he had been a black man, as a layman is called, and they at once replied, 'Oh yes, but he is sickly, and we are setting him up as a lama, in the hope that this may make him well!' Calling some time afterwards, I found the lad still a layman, and on asking about his lamaship, was told, quite as a matter of course, that, having recovered from his sickness, they had not made him a priest, but let him remain a black man.

Another case was that of a Government officer

who I found had shaved his head, laid aside his button, put on the yellow garments, and was living as a priest, in the hope of escaping from a disease which had afflicted him for over a year. The Chinese Government, however, refused to receive his demission of office as final, gave him an indefinite time to play the lama and get well of his disease, on the distinct understanding that at his recovery he should return to the world and perform his duties as before ! And this arrangement seemed so perfectly just and reasonable, both to the man himself and to his friends, that it called forth no remark.

‘The judge was sick,
The judge a priest would be ;
The judge was well,
The judge, no priest was he.’

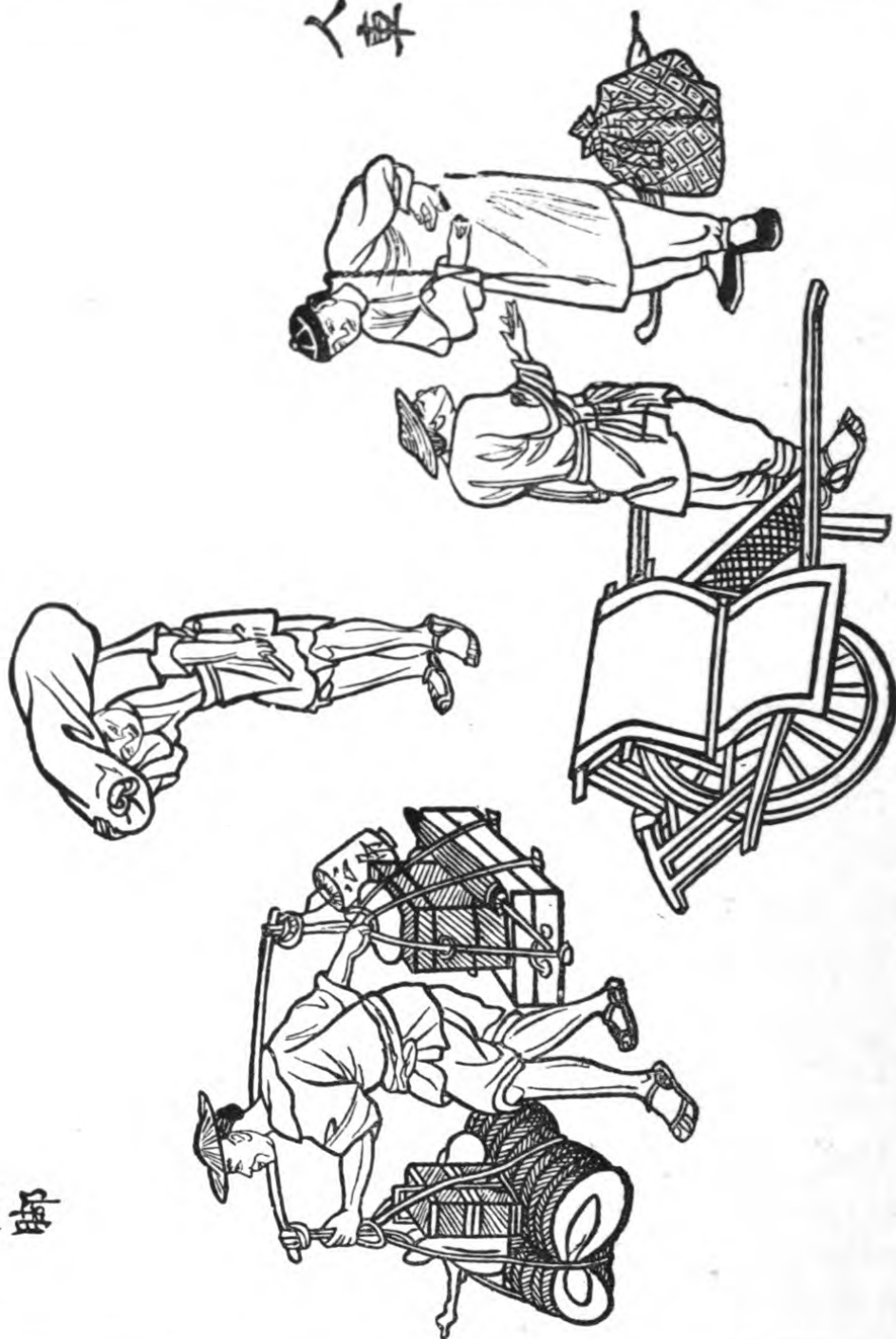
VII.

THE MAN WHO CARRIED TOO MUCH.

Before starting on my first evangelizing tour among the Mongols, I asked how much a camel could carry, and made up loads for each animal to the full amount. For a while all went well. At last we reached the foot of a steep hill, and one of the camels striking work, we came to a standstill. Urging and pressing was useless, the animal would not move,



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CHINESE PORTERS.

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and there was nothing for it but to put up for the night in a Chinese inn near at hand. Next day the camels were again loaded, and another attempt made to face the hill; but it was no use, the camel simply looked at the hill and refused to move. We had again to put back to the inn, and then I was convinced that my camels were too heavily loaded, that I had started on my journey with too many things, and that many desirable and useful things, and even some things deemed necessary, had to be left behind.

After reducing the loads very much, and leaving behind one camel, the hill was once more faced and successfully climbed, and the whole journey was safely accomplished.

How many men start in life with too heavy loads! A young couple arranging for their marriage, and calculating their means, take a fine house, furnish it nicely and start life imposingly, but have not gone far before they come to a hill of difficulty, such as straitened income or enlarged expenditure through some unavoidable cause, such as commercial depression or family sickness, and find they cannot go on till they have reduced their style and left part of their grandeur behind them. The Christian man, too, sometimes finds he has to lighten his baggage if he is to continue his heavenward journey. He would gladly follow Jesus, and have at the same time the

good opinion of the world, be famous among the learned, applauded among the eloquent, or noted for wealth among the rich. Starting with all this gear, he does not go far before he finds he cannot take all these things and go on ; so there is nothing for it but to call a halt, overhaul his plans and schemes, lay aside what he cannot carry, and, with such things as do not hinder his following Jesus and growth in grace, pursue his journey.

Ask almost any intelligent and living Christian man well past middle life, and he will be able to give you a catalogue of aims, ambitions, and hopes, with which he started life, but which he found it necessary to lay aside and be lightened of, in order that he might be able to continue his heavenward journey at all.

A traveller cannot have all the comforts of home, every pilgrim towards the celestial city must have but a limited amount of baggage, and if we are wise we shall be ready to lay aside every weight that hinders us in our Christian race. If we have been foolish enough to start with too much, let us be wise enough to leave behind everything which would stop our progress.

THE END.



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