

There is a City.

There is a city great and strong,
Twelve gates of precious stones,
With turrets and high battlements,
Not needing light of sun;
The streets aglow with fire of gold,
It hath no sound of strife;
In glory all its own it stands
Beside the stream of life.

A joy is there that knows no cry,
A light that ne'er grows dim;
A multitude that never ceases
From grateful praise and hymn.
So all the saints of earth,
And angels there I view;
And there, O vision glorious,
There standeth Jesus, too.

Jesus, I know 'tis He; I see
The mark of nail and spear,
And on His face I catch the trace
Of earth-time smile and tear;
But on His brow a crown shines now,
And bending hosts adore!
'Tis He, 'tis He who on the tree
The thorn crown meekly wore!

O wondrous fair Jerusalem,
Shall I thy gates pass through?
Thy jubilation surely join,
Thy lordly splendours view?
O Crucified, O Glorified,
Shall I Thy face behold,
And join thy ransomed as they sing
Along the streets of gold?

O crowns and thrones and sapphires,
Ye glisten in the light!
Ye cannot flash too far your joy,
Ye cannot blaze too bright;
And some day God shall bid me dwell
Where the great visions shine;
The sight of the Lord and all He is
Shall be the world's and mine.

—Rev. Denis Wortman, D. D., in Religious of the Christ.

How a Chinese Christian Kept the Faith.

BY THEODORA MARSHALL INGLIS.

Old Wen Hua lives in the city of L—, not fifteen miles from Peking. He is the proprietor of that most lucrative business in China, a second-hand clothing shop. But it is not of his business or business ability that we think when old Wen Hua is brought to mind. It is the zeal with which he serves God in a heathen city of ten thousand inhabitants, for he is the only Christian in the place.

He is truly a devoted follower of the Jesus doctrine. It was first explained and interpreted to him by the earnest missionaries who labor throughout North China. After his interest was awakened, he used his limited knowledge of the Chinese characters, and laboriously read his way farther into the truth. It would take too long to trace Wen Hua's development. Enough to say that, beset with persecution at home, ridicule and reviling abroad, loss of personal comfort and business patronage, yet he steadily adhered to the new faith that had brightened his inner life, and which comforted him for the grievances he daily suffered.

The city itself was at first hostile to his new attitude and Wen Hua had a hard time of it, but, as he persevered in his changed way of life, he was finally tolerated by his townspeople in a semi-scornful manner, trying indeed to old Wen Hua's friendly disposition.

When the great political changes of 1898 took place the entire empire felt the increased hostility to foreigners, and especially to the foreign teaching of a new truth. The most active anti-foreign element then, as now, was the Chinese army—a great, ignorant, unwieldy revolutionary body, which even the Empress feared, and which she is continually called upon to pacify. It was with great difficulty, this last winter, that she dismissed the general in command, who had craved audience to solicit Her Majesty's permission to kill all the foreigners in the empire.

The Christian mission work has felt the direful effects of this reaction, following, as it did, the change of rulers, while the great increase in the standing army caused general trepidation. The Empress is as shadowy a figure to her non-official subjects as she is to the average newspaper reader in the United States. But the soldiery is a real terror, always present in menacing attitude upon the public streets, and showering foreigners with threatenings and revilings. The result has been that only the native Christians, strong in hope and faith, have appeared at churches and street chapels. But among these are many who have served God with singleness of heart in love that casteth out fear.

Old Wen Hua is one such. With the revulsion of feeling against Christianity, his relatives and townspeople renewed their objectionable treatment. But it only served as a dark background, against which his faith and good works shone more triumphantly. Contrary, even to the custom of many native Chinese Christians, Wen Hua closed his shop on the Sabbath and spent the day after the manner of his Christian teachers. He told when the day came by means of a large Christian-Chinese

calendar, which he pasted up just outside his shop door.

In December a body of troops marched toward the city, and camped on its outskirts. The following incident, illustrating Wen Hua's trust in God and courage to do right, is best told in his own simple words, as he related his experiences to a member of our Presbyterian mission in Peking.

The soldiers were just outside the city. They hate all foreigners and foreign teaching, especially the Jesus doctrine. On Saturday night an old friend of mine came to call upon me. He said: Take down your calendar. The soldiers will be in the city soon. They will tear you in pieces if they see that paper with foreign teaching on it. They will burn your shop down.

I answered: Do you think I will tear down the paper which tells me when worship day comes? Without it I cannot know the right day to give to the Lord.

Well, you had better tear it down, he said, and open your shop to-morrow. If you don't they will force you to do it, and to sell them garments.

This provoked me, and I said, Do you think we Christians serve our God one day, and fear of the soldiers the next?

Well, he went away dissatisfied with my speech. The next morning, however, he came running to my place, crying: Hurry, hurry! Tear that paper down! There are two soldiers coming to your shop!

I said, No, not if they kill me. Just then the soldiers rushed upon us—two great, fierce-looking men with guns. I was in front of my shop. The taller one stopped when he saw the calendar.

What is this? he cried. Then he read a little, then he rushed up to me, and grunted in a terrible tone, while he shook his fist at me: So you follow the foreign devils,—do you? You shut your shop because they tell you to. Well, now open it. We want to buy garments.

I answered: I cannot open my shop on the Lord's Day. It is against his command.

The Lord? And who is the Lord? Another foreign devil, I suppose! No, I answered: he is the God in heaven whom we Christians worship. And I will not sell you any goods to-day.

With that he looked at me curiously and backed off toward the other man, who spoke to him and soon they walked away.

That afternoon they returned with another older man, who asked me, Does this paper tell you not to open your shop?

No, I said; it only tells me the worship days. When they come, I close my shop.

Then no priest makes you do it? No; only my conscience.

Hg! And who is this Lord you spoke of?

Then I told them some of the truth which they seemed curious to hear.

After a while, the old man said: Well, this story may do for you. Shut your shop, if you want to. We will not touch your paper.

Now my friend was watching from the corner. When they walked away, he came to me in great astonishment.

Didn't they harm you? he cried, nor touch the paper?

You see me safe, I answered. Well, they differ from most soldiers as fierce looking, he said.

You may think that, I replied, but I know that the God whom I serve protects his children.

Who shall say, with a few such men as old Wen Hua, that there is no hope of China's spiritual redemption?—S. S. Times.

Some Deacons I Have Known.

In the many years of my active ministry I have been acquainted with many deacons in various parts of the country. As the result of this observation, I would charge you brethren who enter upon this office by picturing several deacons whom I would present as the awful example for you to avoid.

(1) The Talkative Deacon. One rises before my mind at this moment who in Deacons' Meetings had more to say than all the others combined. He had his comments and criticisms upon the general services of the church, upon the conduct of individual members, upon the frivolity of the young, upon the other churches around his congregation; but appoint him on a committee which he had favored by his talk and the only report ever to be gained from him, was progress, which progress none other could ever discover. Deacons who do as well as talk are desirable, but don't be a talking deacon only.

(2) The Doctrinal Deacon. Now doctrine is not to be despised. It is the foundation of all church and individual Christian work, but doctrine which is only foundation is like a building which never rises above the surface of the earth. One deacon whom I knew years ago comes before me now, who believed in particular redemption, limited

atonement, eternal election, who could expound all the deep things of God, loved to soar amid the eternal purposes, but did little else. No matter how active and earnest and effective a fellow-brother might be, except he be squared up on all these doctrines, he is not a worthy Christian. Don't be a deacon like that.

(3) The Optimistic Deacon. I have known men who saw everything in a rosy light. Everything goes with them. Nobody does wrong, nothing is working at a disadvantage, failure is a thing unknown to them. Whereas, we know that everything is not going right, we know there is much that is wrong, whereas we deceive ourselves and stultify our brethren. Don't be an optimistic deacon.

(4) The Pessimistic Deacon. There are some deacons who never see good in the church. I think of one especially often declared that the churches were filled with unregenerate men. The best people they called practical hypocrites, their words could not be depended upon, their Christian character was not thorough. One such deacon called upon me to tell me of the difficulties which he saw in the church of which he was a member, and to ask my advice as to whether he had not better change his church relations.

I thought he had, and so advised him. But then he told me he fore saw a crisis in the church of which he was a member, and thought it his duty to stay until the crisis occurred. Just why he wished to be in at the crisis, I do not know, but it reminded me of a dying sheep I once saw in a farmer's field. Around the sheep, perched on the limbs of trees and rails of the fences, were scores of buzzards. They were waiting for the crisis. Don't be a deacon of that sort.

(5) The Domineering Deacon. I have known some who thought it their special function to lord it over God's heritage. They wanted to rule, while as Paul declares that instead of limiting their good ruling to their own households, they wish to extend it to the pastor, the other deacons, the trustees, the Sunday School, the church, the congregation, world at large. Like Alexander the Great, they looked for and wept for other worlds to conquer. Don't be a domineering deacon.

But you will ask me what sort of deacons shall we then be? I answer such as are portrayed in the 6th of Acts, men of honest report; or as the revised version puts it, good report; men of faith, men filled with the Holy Ghost; men who have the executive ability to manage the charities and other financial operations of the church; men whose spiritual power will be so marked that, as occurred in Jerusalem, the word of the Lord grew exceedingly, and the disciples multiplied. Notice the progress as noted in the case of Stephen, the deacon. We are told he was filled with faith and the Holy Ghost, then we are told he was filled with faith and power. The revised version substitutes grace for faith. In this second citation, here then is the progress—faith, the Holy Ghost, grace, power. Be such deacons as these, men of faith, men enjoying all the graces God bestows, and then will you be men of power.—Baptist Commonwealth.

Women in the Transvaal.

A correspondent who has spent some time in the Wakkerstroom district of the Transvaal, sends notes about the ways and customs of the Dutch ladies with whom she lived. They have very pale complexions, in the whiteness of which they take their pride. To keep off the scorching sun's rays they envelop their heads in white linen scarfs, worn like the nuns and sisters of mercy, and over this wear either the sunbonnet or cappie, or a large straw hat tied under the chin with strings. They have the impression that they burn black, and know nothing of the becoming brown sun-burn which English girls like to get. We went to a Boer dance one evening, and heard the remark made that as English girls we danced better than they did, but that we were dreadfully sun-burned.

At one house where we stayed for the night, the four daughters entertained us in our bed-room by showing us box after box full of elaborate crochet-work, counterpanes, antimacassars, and yards and yards of crocheted lace frillings which they had made. They are also very clever makers of paper flowers, and many of the parlours and entertaining rooms are freely adorned with colored bunches and festoons of them. These girls showed us the dresses they had had for the last night. They go about four times a year in their waggons to the nearest church, where they camp out or out span for about a week on the open square surrounding the building, and go to church every day. There are sometimes a hundred or more waggons around the church at one night, and there of course they meet their

friends, relations, and acquaintances of the district.

In the Boer houses of the better class there is an American organ, or seraphane, and the girls are generally able to play simple tunes, and accompany songs and hymns. The four girls above mentioned surprised us that evening by singing the familiar old songs, In the Gloaming and Just before the Battle, Mother, in preference to Dutch songs. As only one seemed able to speak English, we were surprised to hear the others join in the choruses. The daughter of the house is always the one to bring the customary cup of coffee to the visitors.

In some houses the bedroom walls were adorned with pages from fashion-books, the gay dresses looking somewhat old-fashioned to our ideas on closer examination. Their ignorance is sometimes surprising. One old Dutch frau quite thought that there were Kaffirs or black people all over the world, and no doubt wondered how the English could get any work done with no servants at command. Many of them have a blissful belief that there is a large estate in France belonging to them, through some of their French antecedents, and one lady emphatically stated the worth of her property at £3,000, but we heard that the price was sometimes more and sometimes less, according to the apparent credulity of the listener.—British Weekly.

True To Christ.

John Nelson lived in England. He was known as the Yorkshire Mason and was a coworker with John Wesley. He was a man of earnestness and strong convictions, and in his devotion to what he believed was right, he is an excellent example to young people who would, in face of all opposition, be true to Christ.

When Nelson was threatened with dismissal because of his refusal to work on Sunday, he said: I would rather have my wife and children beg their way barefooted to heaven than ride in a coach to hell! I will run the risk of wanting bread here rather than the hazard of wanting water hereafter!

It is interesting to relate that Nelson's employer admired his earnest steadfastness so much that he increased his wages and stopped all Sunday work.

Another faithfulness to Christ was shown by a converted South African negro slave, whose godly owner said to him: Sambo, if you go to hear the missionary I'll flog you soundly.

Must tell Jesus that, was the quiet answer.

Presently, when the cruel slave owner saw poor Sambo kneeling under a tree, the great tears trickling down his black cheeks, as he told his sorrow to his unseen but ever-present Friend, his heart was strangely moved. Next morning, after giving his orders for the day, he added unexpectedly, Sambo you may go to the missionary's cabin if you want to.

Must tell Jesus that, too, massa. Me tank massa very much. And again Sambo was seen hastening to his favorite spot in the wood to pour out his heart in glad thanksgiving to his loving Saviour.

NOT WHITEWASHED.—Eddie, whose father was a Methodist preacher, was greatly interested in a revival meeting being held at one of the country appointments, and invariably inquired the first thing in the morning if there had been any conversions yet, and was greatly disappointed when told there were no visible results. He seemed to think the devil was pitted against his father, and that papa was playing a losing game. About the close of the meeting one person made a profession, and Eddie, greatly elated by the announcement, exclaimed, Well you didn't get whitewashed, did you?—Voice.

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