

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>

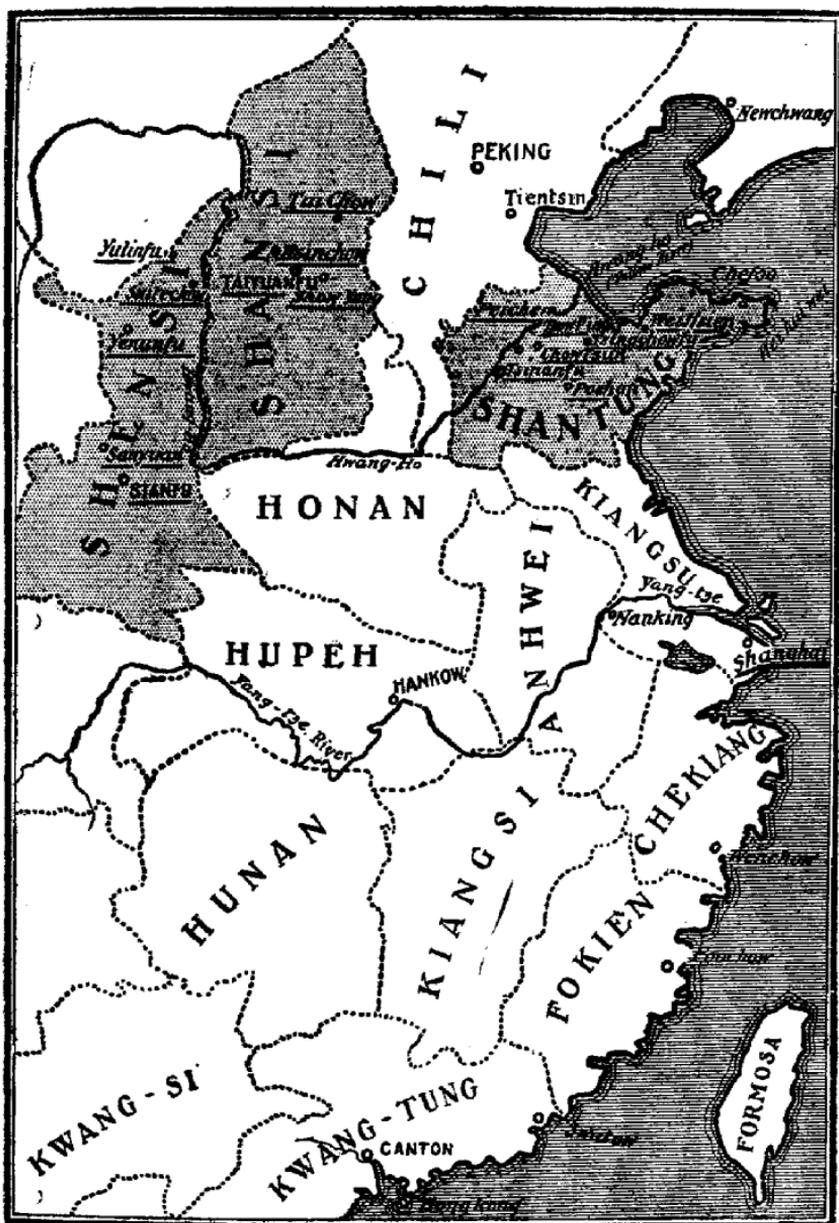


PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>



SKETCH-MAP OF BAPTIST MISSIONS IN NORTH CHINA, SHOWING PLACES MENTIONED IN THIS VOLUME.



Carl G. Robinson

CECIL ROBERTSON

MEMORIALS OF
CECIL ROBERTSON
OF SIANFU

MEDICAL MISSIONARY

BY

F. B. MEYER
B.A., D.D.

SECOND EDITION

LONDON
THE CAREY PRESS
19 FURNIVAL STREET, E.C.

1916

CONTENTS

	PAGE
ONE OF DR. ROBERTSON'S FAVOURITE HYMNS -	vi
FOREWORD - - - - -	vii
 CHAPTER	
I. BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS - - -	I
II. JOTTINGS FROM DR. ROBERTSON'S DIARY -	18
III. THE MISSIONARY DESIGNATE - - -	25
IV. AT YENANFU—GETTING INTO HARNESS -	41
V. ON THE EVE OF THE GREAT REVOLUTION -	54
VI. A BRIEF VIEW OF THE REVOLUTION - - -	65
VII. THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION - - -	77
VIII. SUMMONED TO T'UNG KUAN - - -	104
IX. BACK AGAIN AT SIANFU - - - - -	119
X. THE LAST LEAVES OF HIS DIARY - - -	137
XI. THE TRIUMPHANT END - - - - -	144
APPENDIX: DR. ROBERTSON'S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT TO YENANFU - - - - -	169

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	TO FACE PAGE
CECIL FREDERICK ROBERTSON -	<i>Frontispiece</i>
DR. ROBERTSON STARTING ON THE JOURNEY TO YENANFU - - - - -	44
DR. CECIL ROBERTSON AND A GROUP OF PATIENTS -	88
THE EAST GATE OF SIANFU - - - - -	132
DR. CECIL ROBERTSON: GIFT OF TABLET AND UMBRELLA - - - - -	132
THE ORDER OF THE TIGER: DECORATION AND DIPLOMA	161

Sketch-Map of Baptist Missions in North China.

ONE OF DR. ROBERTSON'S FAVOURITE
HYMNS

- " FATHER, who art alone
Our Helper and our stay,
O hear us, as we plead
For loved ones far away:
And shield with Thine almighty hand
Our wanderers by sea and land.
- " For Thou, our Father God,
Art present everywhere,
And bendest low Thine ear
To catch the faintest prayer,
Waiting rich blessings to bestow
On all Thy children here below.
- " O compass with Thy love
The daily path they tread;
And may Thy light and truth
Upon their hearts be shed,
That, one in all things with Thy will,
Heaven's peace and joy their souls may fill.
- " Guard them from every harm
When danger shall assail,
And teach them that Thy power
Can never, never fail:
We cannot with our loved ones be,
But trust them, Father, unto Thee.
- " We all are travellers here
Along life's various road,
Meeting and parting oft
Till we shall mount to God,—
At home at last, with those we love,
Within the Fatherland above."

FOREWORD

WHEN I undertook the sacred duty of preparing this memorial volume of one so closely associated with the Church to which I have the honour to minister, I thought of writing his biography; but as I commenced to peruse the material ready to my hand, particularly his letters to his family, and especially those to his mother, I realized that my share in this book must be of a much humbler description, and that to connect together these most beautiful records from his own hand, as well as the impressions produced on his familiar associates, was the highest service that I could render.

It has been a most moving and uplifting office. Often as I have looked up from my writing-table to the pine-clad mountains, which bathe their massive roots in the waters reaching hence to lovely Lucerne, I have felt that there is nothing in the spiritual landscape so lofty as the experience of a human soul, which is accessible in its lower interests to all that is human and natural, but which rears itself to Heaven in untrodden heights, where its whiteness, undefiled by human footstep, lies open to the first sudden awakening kiss of dawn, and the last lingering tenderness flung from the west.

The fire that glows in these embers, which I have

Foreword

taken from the altar, is God-enkindled. May it spread, awakening in thousands of hearts a kindred passion, until the youth of our Christian families catch the fire to spread it in a far-reaching conflagration of pure love to God and man. The hope of the world's redemption lies there. In another sense than the literal the elements have yet to melt with fervent heat, and many of the works in which we pride ourselves have to be burned up. Is it not written also, that creation awaits the uncurtaining of the sons of God? Here at least the curtain has been lifted from one of them, of whom Dr. Young, whose life he saved, said, when the news of his friend's death reached him: "He was the only perfect man I ever knew. There was never anything about him that one could wish otherwise."

F. B. MEYER.

CECIL ROBERTSON OF SIANFU

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

CECIL FREDERICK ROBERTSON was born at Clapham, a suburb on the south of London, on April 9, 1884. He was the third child of his parents. His mother speaks of him as a bright and happy boy, fond of games, tractable, and affectionate. At school he won golden opinions for his thoroughness and painstaking industry, but as yet nothing augured the distinguished career that lay before him, save that his parents, as their children were growing up, hoped that one of their family at least should be surrendered to the great missionary cause.

In 1895 the family removed to Tottenham Court Road, where the father took up a responsible position in the management of the Bank which was to become so intimately associated with Cecil's memories in future years. "The old home at the Bank," he says, writing from China to his mother in anticipation of Christmas, 1910, "will always be the home of our memory, wherever each one of us is, and nothing can be sweeter to any of us than the memory of all those years of happy united love, of all our youthful

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu

hopes and fears, successes and failures, and especially of all your and dear father's unselfish love for us. I can recall the happy times we used to have—the daily walk to school, the evening home-work, the sorrow of the toil, and the joy of success. Then later came the bigger things—the coming to Christ, the joining of the Church, the decision to come abroad, if God should permit, and of all your and dear father's loving sympathy in every step, and much more than sympathy. How much we have to be thankful for! How full of joy those years have been, and how little of sorrow and shadow we have had! What depths of gratitude ought they not to produce to our Heavenly Father! Oh for a heart of real love and gratitude, which will not be exhausted in mere words, but will give itself out in daily Christ-like ministration to those for whom He cares!" And again: "What a precious thing the memory of a good and happy home is! It is not until one gets away that one realizes how much it means to one, and I am sure that I can never be grateful enough for all the happy memories that home will always mean to me." On the eve of the great rebellion he writes: "Just now there come the strains of music from someone playing the harmonium. It is one of those lovely hymns of peace that Grace [his sister] used to play. These memories are very precious, and they come to one with greater force now and again." He was always counting on a family reunion. "It does not seem a year since I left. What a blessed, blessed joy this communion of love is! Distance makes no difference, does it?"

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu

hopes and fears, successes and failures, and especially of all your and dear father's unselfish love for us. I can recall the happy times we used to have—the daily walk to school, the evening home-work, the sorrow of the toil, and the joy of success. Then later came the bigger things—the coming to Christ, the joining of the Church, the decision to come abroad, if God should permit, and of all your and dear father's loving sympathy in every step, and much more than sympathy. How much we have to be thankful for! How full of joy those years have been, and how little of sorrow and shadow we have had! What depths of gratitude ought they not to produce to our Heavenly Father! Oh for a heart of real love and gratitude, which will not be exhausted in mere words, but will give itself out in daily Christ-like ministration to those for whom He cares!" And again: "What a precious thing the memory of a good and happy home is! It is not until one gets away that one realizes how much it means to one, and I am sure that I can never be grateful enough for all the happy memories that home will always mean to me." On the eve of the great rebellion he writes: "Just now there come the strains of music from someone playing the harmonium. It is one of those lovely hymns of peace that Grace [his sister] used to play. These memories are very precious, and they come to one with greater force now and again." He was always counting on a family reunion. "It does not seem a year since I left. What a blessed, blessed joy this communion of love is! Distance makes no difference, does it?"

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

“ I come to speak of Cecil Robertson as I have known him since he was eleven years of age, and I have known him intimately. As Secretary of Regent’s Park Chapel, I had to interview him for admission to the Church, and as Superintendent of the Sunday-school I had him as one of my teachers. The outstanding feature of his early life was his earnestness in all that he did. Speaking of him recently, a Christian worker who knew him intimately described him as one who could always be depended upon, and as doing heartily whatever he put his hand to. On his conversion to God, he joined the Junior, and later the Intermediate Society of Christian Endeavour at Regent’s Park, and into this work he threw himself with great heartiness. Subsequently he was transferred to the Senior Society of Christian Endeavour, and was appointed Convener of the Missionary Committee, and this was another important step in his missionary career.

“ About this period he often spoke to his parents, and they to him, about his future work, but up to this time it is evident that he had no definite thought of becoming a missionary—he was to be a surveyor. Soon after he became Convener of this Missionary Committee he initiated a Missionary Exhibition at the Chapel, and as Secretary of the Exhibition he practically carried it through by himself. It involved a great amount of labour, and during this time of organization and arrangement the question was put by his mother: ‘ What are you hoping for as the result of all this labour?’ He replied: ‘ To increase interest in the missionary

Birth and Early Years.

work, and to get someone to offer for it.' Though, as a matter of fact, he was so fully occupied with the working of the Exhibition that he had no time even to listen to speakers in its various courts, it directly brought about his decision to give his life to the Foreign Mission Field.

"A little later Mr. Shorrock, with whom he was to become so closely associated in after years, asked one of the lady workers if she knew of any boys or girls specially interested in missionary work, and she mentioned Cecil Robertson, and introduced the lad to the great missionary. This was a further step in the decision of his life. Shortly after the Exhibition was over he came to his parents, and said that if they were willing he would like to offer himself. They talked it over that night, and felt that if he could be a medical missionary he would be spending his life in the best possible way. Sir Alfred Pearce Gould, who was greatly interested in the lad, advised him to enter the Middlesex Hospital, told him of the entrance-scholarships, and encouraged him to try to win one. He followed this advice, and his career began. It was a most successful one throughout, and he proved to be one of the most brilliant among the young medical students and graduates in that hospital."

Dr. Robertson thus summarized the influences that moulded his career in these formative days:

"1. Missionary influence at home, an influence felt in my boyhood, and far greater than I can rightly estimate. As I look back now and get a

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

better perspective of things, I know that home has been the greatest influence of my life.

“ 2. Missionary influence at work in a Christian Endeavour Society, where I first began to get a definite idea that God wanted me to go abroad.

“ 3. John x. 16, a verse that has impressed me deeply, and has been the chief factor in making my desire definite. Will *you* ponder on that *must* in the light of 2 Cor. v. 14, 15 ?

“ I must also express my indebtedness to the missionary influence of Regent's Park College, and to the Student Movement, factors that came into my life during my student days, and helped to keep my purpose true.”

These, then, were the mountain springs that fed the full river of his life, and these paragraphs must be full of inspiration to parents, to workers in Christian Endeavour Societies, and to pastors. We never know what we are doing when we tend and strengthen young life, or place before it, however incidentally, the highest ideals of Christian character and service.

The following enumeration of the successive steps of his student career must be set down here in detail as a refutation of the idea that earnest piety is inconsistent with the highest attainments of industry and genius, though Dr. Robertson sedulously disclaimed the latter, and insisted that his successes were due, under God's blessing, to mental discipline and hard application. But probably these are the chief constituents of what we know as genius, which is the breath of a high purpose in life that

Birth and Early Years.

concentrates all faculty and power on a supreme object.

Dr. Cecil Robertson entered the Middlesex Hospital on September 30, 1901, and the following appointments and prizes fell to him in this brilliant series:

In the Medical School he won the Class Prizes in Practical Anatomy, in Physiology, and in Practical Surgery, and was awarded Certificates of Merit in Anatomy, in Pharmacology, and in Practical Midwifery.

At the close of his student career he carried off the Governors' Prize, the Freeman Scholarship, and the Senior Broderip Scholarship, which is the "Blue Ribbon" of the School.

In the Hospital he held all the usual clinical appointments, and in addition served for six months as House Physician under Dr. (now Sir James) Kingston Fowler, and then was for a like period House Surgeon under Mr. (now Sir Alfred) Pearce Gould. He took the Diplomas of M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P. in 1907, and in May of the same year he graduated M.B. and B.S. at the University of London. In 1909 he was admitted a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

These notable attainments and successes were not allowed to obscure the clear testimony which he always maintained for his religious convictions. There was never any doubt as to his attitude to Jesus Christ. His associates might favour or oppose, but his course was perfectly straight and consistent. In this connection we may quote the testimony of

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

Dr. Gottfried O. Teichmann, one of his fellow-students at the Middlesex Hospital: "The work that he did in connection with the Christian Union will remain. When he first went to the Hospital the Christian Union was practically dead, but owing to his zeal and energy it became a real union of helpfulness, and I well remember the morning prayer meetings that we used to hold downstairs in one of the demonstrators' rooms. What a help they were day by day in our hospital work!"

During these busy years he was keen on various branches of Christian service. He held a Sunday-school class, took an interest in a boy's club, and visited lodging-houses on Sunday evenings. He was always fond of work among boys, and seemed to realize the urgency of filling every spare moment with service of some kind.

In 1903 he wrote the following in a friend's album:

" The day is short,
The task is great,
The workmen are sluggish,
The reward is much,
And the Master's call is urgent."

His earnest devotion was combined with an intensely robust manhood. There was nothing effeminate or sickly about him. He was always overflowing with life, gaiety, and interest in all that is natural and human. He bore himself as a strong, well-built, muscular young fellow, who could bear fatigue better than most, and to whom life was sweet.

In addition to the Scholarships and Degrees mentioned above, he was awarded the Lord Scholarship at Regent's Park College, and was in residence there

Birth and Early Years.

for three years; and we are indebted to fellow-students—than whom none can form more accurate judgments—for the following memoranda:

“ It may be some comfort to you to know that to me personally his clean, manly, Christian outlook was more than a help ; and I had the good luck in my first year at Regent’s Park College to be given the room opposite to that which Cecil occupied, and received more inspiration from his manner of living than I can well estimate. Others no doubt have written and spoken much of his ability; I prefer to dwell upon the effect of his Christ-filled life upon us. Many Regent’s Park men are thanking God that they were privileged to know Cecil Robertson ”
(Rev. Thomas Powell).

“ How often have I secretly longed to be the man *he* was ! What an apt pupil he was in the School of Christ ! But he would have been the last to confess it. He breathed the very spirit of his Master ” *(Rev. A. E. Hubbard, afterwards his brother-in-law).*

The following is from one who was very intimate with him in his college days :

“ The news of Cecil Robertson’s death came as a great shock to those who knew him in college, for there was no man in his day who was more respected, and more loved.

“ One thinks of him in three ways : As a very true man, as a very true friend, and as a very true Christian.

“ The fact that he was just a real man, with all the spirit, all the love of fun, all the humour of a

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

real human being, may be somewhat overlooked in these days when we necessarily give our minds rather to his character as a Christian gentleman; but it may encourage those who read this memoir, and who see the transparent nature of his Christian discipleship, to know that he was a true man among us, ready for any of the good-humoured joking with which every college worthy of the name abounds. Some men's joking angers—his never did. It was all done with such a good spirit of comradeship that when you discovered him to be a real man, and a better than yourself, in all the youthful exuberance of college life, you ended by loving him the more.

“ But it was in his friendship that he shone. When he could spare time from his busy life to spend an hour, two hours, three hours, four hours after supper in intimate converse, you discovered his wonderful powers of affection, of sympathy, of love. A quiet, shy, reserved man he was. He did not find it easy to speak and tell out what was in him, but when he drew aside the curtain, or when friendship drew it aside, a heart was revealed true and loyal as steel, and as tender as a very good woman's. It came out, for instance, when a friend was lying for weeks on end at death's door, and, with all his doctor's knowledge of how disease works, he gathered a little company of us (friends of his and of the sick man) for prayer, and night after night led us to the room adjoining the infirmary to pray for him. His friendship did not grow weary or slack; it could stand the test of patience.

“ Any man who was privileged to call him

Birth and Early Years.

friend learned much of the great gift God has given in the love of man for man. But we knew more of him than that. We knew him as a man to whom God was very real, who had a living friendship with Christ, who was moulded by the Master for His own use. None could doubt it. Sometimes we doubted why we and others were in college; none could ever doubt why he was there. Everything about him spoke an intense conviction of the love of God and of the saving grace of Christ. He was a man with a message, a message which he had first of all learnt in his own heart and life. His influence was one of unmixed goodness. The religious life of the college was stronger, the Christian character of the men ennobled, because he was there, and he was missed by one and all when his duties at Middlesex Hospital took him from us.

“ In our blindness we imagine that God can ill spare him from China, and yet we doubt not that this life, so truly human and yet so Christ-like, has not been laid down in vain ” (*Rev. E. Murray Page*).

Yet one other student photograph must be appended:

“ Fellow-students in college judge each other's worth by standards that differ from those set by people who view them from outside. To these the badge of a student's distinction is not seldom the number and quality of his degrees. But to his fellows it is the tone of his life, and his capacity for friendship. Unless these are sound and large, a man need not expect homage and popularity merely

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

by reason of his intellectual brilliance. None are more generous in their appreciation of academical success than students; but we have known brilliant men pass from college "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung" by members of their colleges, who were the best judges of their worth. Cecil Robertson was a brilliant student, and Regent's Park men are not likely to forget or minimize the glory he has added to a roll of intellectual fame already long and brilliant. But somehow when I think of him—and that is often—it is not the skilled surgeon whom I image, but the perfect gentleman, and the choice disciple of Jesus Christ, whose friendship I reckon one of the most precious acquisitions of college days. It began on the evening of my arrival at Regent's Park, and he started it by offering, with his quiet smile, to help me unpack. And so throughout. He was always willing to help men to do things—to win the 'footer' match for his year, to organize coffee suppers, to run the Athenian Society, to sing carols. But without any deliberate effort on his part he helped us to *be* something finer than we were. Virtue went out of him, and if it is true that 'the divinest prerogative of friendship is the communication to others of all we have ourselves experienced to be most divine,' then Cecil Robertson proved himself to be a friend of a rare type. It is a rarer thing in a theological college than people imagine—this communication to fellow-students of the Divine in each. I suspect that Cecil Robertson was drawing from the Source more constantly than some of us. At any rate, he kept the early morning

Birth and Early Years.

watch with the Lord, and so was always cheerful at breakfast-time—a somewhat severe test of a man's tranquillity. Indeed, he impressed me always as a fine representative of a fine Christian type, the Medical Student Volunteer, healthy, restrained, skilful in far vision, and steady in hand. The theological student is somewhat different—as his work is. But to have one living amongst us who so blended devotion and medical skill, somehow made the last commission of our Lord very attractive to His disciples.

“ One test of a deep friendship is the ease with which a man can pray with his friend and talk off of the Lord. It was easy to give the spirit wings in Cecil Robertson's company. I have memories of many quiet seasons of communion with him at college, at his home—whose life I was privileged to share—and in Scotland, where he visited me in my first charge. Sometimes little was said, but one had the sense that, if Christ could be mediated through men, it would be men of the type of my friend. I asked him, I remember, if he would preach for me one Sunday evening. He replied that he could not preach a sermon to save his life, but that, if I liked, he would tell my people why he was going to China. And as I heard him speak out the thoughts within him, and watched the faces of his hearers, I got on the track of the true preacher's secret—conviction of a personal experience of the Lord, an understanding of how to find life's great purpose, and a resolute purpose to do it.

“ Thinking of all the gracious influence which he

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

shed on us, his fellow-students, I can understand the love Cecil Robertson evoked from his Chinese people. For the appeal which a devoted Christian gentleman makes is intelligible everywhere. He has gone to his Lord before the shadows had time to lengthen, but my faith is that, somewhere and somehow, he is still at his task, the significance of which to us, perhaps, he did not realize down here—the task of commending the Master by simply living his own fine life. But I will tell him some day that for me at least he was and must ever be a perfect knight of Jesus Christ" (*Rev. James Amos, M.A.*).

And the impression made on his fellow-students was that also of his pastors and the Church at Regent's Park. Rev. E. G. Gange gives this unhesitating testimony: "Without exception, I have never met a more Christ-like young man; even before he went to China he was, or seemed to be, eminently fitted for the Home-Call."

"It was my great privilege," writes Mr. Godwin, one of the Elders, "to know Dr. Cecil Robertson for about eight years before he left for China. His personality and deep spiritual earnestness have left a deep impression on me, which will never wear off; and when I heard of the wonderful work he was doing during the Revolution, knowing him as I did, I was not in the least surprised. He only needed the opportunity to use his brilliant gifts, and to show his strong and gentle character. . . . I took his class in the Sunday-school when duty called him elsewhere. You could tell at once that the lads had a teacher who had gained their attention and

Birth and Early Years.

deep affection. I saw a good deal of him during the last year he was in England; he attended one very precious to us. During the time she was under medical treatment, his devotion and generous care for the six weeks she was unable to walk, we can never forget. Often would he come and read to and converse with her; his conversation was always helpful and instructive. Often would he carry her down and up four flights of stairs, and take her out in a bath-chair on the Heath; his great gentleness and kindness she will ever remember.

“ Though somewhat retiring, he had a good deal of humour, which often flashed out, cheering those with whom he came in contact.

“ It was my joy to preside over the last meeting he addressed of the Regent's Park Chapel Young People's Society before leaving for China. I mentioned in the few remarks I made that he had been called to the noblest work in which anyone could be engaged. Before commencing his address he said he did not quite agree with what I had said; he thought the noblest was in doing the Will of God in whatever sphere we were placed. Just what I expected from him.

“ When his beloved father wrote and told me that he had passed into the presence of the Saviour he so loved to serve, my thoughts went at once to Murray McCheyne, who passed away at the same age, the fragrance of whose life is still with us. And so will Cecil be remembered for years to come at home, and especially in that wonderful country for which he so devotedly gave his life. Well done, good and

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord! We loved thee well, but Jesus loved thee best. Good-night, until the day break and the shadows flee away, and we see our Saviour face to face, and thee too, whom we loved so much."

Few who were present at Bloomsbury Chapel on Thursday afternoon, April 3, 1913, will ever forget the tender and eloquent words with which the great surgeon, to whom Dr. Robertson owed so much, and whom he loved so sincerely—Sir Alfred Pearce Gould—referred to this portion of his career. He recalled the zeal with which he threw himself into the Missionary Exhibition, to which we have referred, and his introduction to the great appeal of medical missions. And then, with the intimate knowledge which he had gained of the young student's character and gifts during his course at the Middlesex Hospital, Sir Alfred described his brilliant successes in passing examinations and winning scholarships and prizes, until he took the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons, the highest medical degree in the world. In a most graphic manner the speaker pictured Dr. Robertson's courage and devotion, his strength of purpose and consecration to the high and holy purposes to which he had dedicated himself, and closed by saying: "I am not going to utter one sad word. . . . Can we be sad over a life like that? Thank God for Cecil Robertson!" And the affection shown by his chief was warmly reciprocated. Again and again there are allusions in Dr. Robertson's diary to his noble friend. Writing to his mother on September 9,

Birth and Early Years.

1911, he says: " I had a nice letter from Sir Alfred this week. I can never be too grateful for having had a year of such intimate contact with him at the hospital. What a happy memory it will always be !" And among his most ardent desires, whenever he thought of returning home for his furlough, was the anticipation of grasping again the hand which had so often encouraged him in his student career.

CHAPTER II

JOTTINGS FROM DR. ROBERTSON'S DIARY

THE Christ-likeness to which so many of his early associates have borne witness was not attained without a struggle, and of this the following jottings from his diary give evidence. This sacred record begins with the whole of a favourite hymn, copied out in his own hand:

- “ That mystic word of Thine, O Sovereign Lord,
Is all too pure, too high, too deep for me:
Weary of striving, and with longing faint,
I breathe it back again in prayer to Thee.
- “ Abide in me, I pray, and I in Thee;
From this good hour, O leave me never more:
Then shall the discord cease, the wound be healed,
The lifelong bleeding of the soul be o'er.
- “ Abide in me; o'ershadow by Thy love
Each half-formed purpose, and dark thought of sin;
Quench, ere it rise, each selfish, low desire,
And keep my soul as Thine, calm and divine.
- “ Abide in me; there have been moments blest
When I have heard Thy voice and felt Thy power;
Then evil lost its grasp, and passion, hushed,
Owned the divine enchantment of the hour.
- “ These were but seasons, beautiful and rare;
Abide in me, and they shall ever be;
Fulfil at once Thy precept and my prayer—
Come and abide in me, and I in Thee.”

Jottings from Dr. Robertson's Diary.

January 6, 1907.—Had such a hard struggle with my besetting sin, and had to admit defeat. O God, help me to overcome! I seem to lose faith. Oh, for more of the victorious power of Christ in the daily life, then this and other temptations would lose their power.

January 27.—Much to thank God for during the past week. He has been near me. May I never stray from Him!

February 3.—Failure again to-day! I failed to look to Him, Who alone gives strength; and yet how many times this week has victory come by obedience to that law! May I be more humble!

March 15.—Fallen again! How strange it seems when I had a special time of communion and prayer this morning, and oh how miserably feeble and sad are the excuses of it beforehand! Why is it? Because again I did not seek the presence of Jesus Christ. The spiritual sense becomes so blunted, unless, *immediately* the temptation comes, I go to Him. It is difficult to go afterwards! O Lord, however little I may desire to seek Thee in my time of need, help me to struggle to Thy feet, and remain there until I know that the strength has returned to me.

April 19.—May I not forget that all this success is given to me for a purpose. I would use it only for Thy glory, O Lord. Help me to put aside all selfish desires!

May 7.—I am glad to be able to know "my times are in Thy hands!" Oh that my life were in more accord with that fact!

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

May 19.—Oh, that I might cast myself more wholly on God, and take for myself all His greatness! As I look back on my life since Whit Sunday, 1900, my power over sin has largely been in proportion to the care with which I have kept the "morning watch." O God, I beseech Thee come Thou again and take control of all. I cannot control myself even in little things. Come, oh come, and help me daily to open all my life to Thee. I lose and fail without Thee. There has been outward success, but how little spiritual. Come Thou, and I *will* yield all to Thee, so that Thou wilt live in me a pure, unselfish, true, manly life. Teach me to know how little and how weak I am! Let me not think there is any virtue in spending much time in prayer, but only that Thou mayest come and feed my soul.

Saturday, June 1.—M.B. result. Truly God has been good to me, and how little have I given in return! Help me, O God, to give more for Thee.

June 5.—As Dr. S. put it when I left school, I have now come to the end of Volume II., and it makes me look back to see what progress I have made. Much medically, but how much, I wonder, have I grown into the fulness of the stature of Christ? How much have I appropriated of my inheritance in Him? How much easier is it for me to speak to others about Christ than three or four years ago? How much more do I think of my professed Lord and Master, and how much less of the good opinion of my fellow-men? I cannot but feel I have come very far short! How often I have faced, in some measure at any rate, these very same

Jottings from Dr. Robertson's Diary.

facts within the last five years! Why is it, then, that there is not more enthusiasm, not more fruit? I can only answer, because I have not given Christ my full allegiance and faith; I have not liked to give up certain things. And now what am I faced with? A life naturally nervous and weak to be spent for others in my own strength without real spiritual power, or a life made divinely strong by the indwelling Spirit used for Christ's glory in His service, and daring to face all that men may say and think. There is no doubt which I want, but have I faith enough? Oh, may I realize that it is not so much my faith, as my faith in HIM. I must settle this, but, O God, show me Thyself, that I may be quite sure of what I am doing! I cannot take any definite step without being sure that I am really looking to Thee.

June 18.—I thought I settled this a week ago, but again the old temptation has come up, and I have been weak. How blessed is that eighth chapter of Romans! But how it shames one! O God, lead me into a fuller faith in those blessed facts, that it is the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead that is to quicken us; and that we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father!" I cannot declare that I will keep close to Him for ALL the future, though I want to; but I know how weak I am, and just for to-day I can, and do most joyfully, trust myself to Him, and pray that on the morrow again I may know I am under the shadow of His wings.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

June 25.—Went to see Mrs. Wilson, who told us how wonderfully God had provided for her needs since Mr. Wilson died. Just step by step, as she has committed her way to Him, so He has provided—her banking account is just like the barrel of meal which nearly runs out, but is always replenished, and has never failed. Oh, for a faith which can take everything to God in *reality*, not merely in word, and which can truly trust in Him!

July 21.—I have been much enjoying the reading of "Robert Falconer," and feel it has been a real help to me, but find some things which I must think out. One thing is impressed upon me, that God loves all men far, far more than we do, and is far more anxious and active in their recovery to their true life than we, and that therefore, though people will not suffer by our faithlessness so much as we, for they are in His care, yet we shall be deprived of the privilege of working for Him and with Him. Also we must learn to look upon men as Christ did, and be willing to be spent for them as He was. It is more by a demonstration of love guided by God's Holy Spirit than by much speaking that we shall win men.

Have taken up the study of Gospel of St. Mark. I want to learn more of His character from this vivid record, and to learn to look upon my fellows more from His point of view, that is, in the light of their possibilities.

July 27.—On reading the above this evening it seems to me my attitude is entirely wrong; it is not my declaration of love that is of any avail, but

Jottings from Dr. Robertson's Diary.

His great grace and love; for surely He wants me far, far more than I want Him, wonderful though such a fact is. Still there must be a constant yielding of my will to His, but also a joyful yielding.

August 4.—I took Sunday-school this afternoon. Felt I did not make things clear enough. How it makes me feel the need of being taught of God one's self! How one longs to have that immediate knowledge of God! Then would self fade away, and God would be all in all.

September 1.—Had a nice talk with Lewis this afternoon. We both feel much the need of a definite authoritative attitude to certain great controversies—*e.g.*, the virgin birth, future destiny of man, etc. At the same time I feel the need of a truer knowledge of Christ and a closer fellowship with Him. He seems to be the only certainty; but how to grow like Him—that is the difficulty. Surely this growth in grace is a slow process. As I look forward to work in China, and think of having students under me, I feel how tremendous is my need—both of a closer fellowship with Christ, and a definite knowledge of God's plan for men. I must try to study the Bible more earnestly and to live by it, but so often there is so little inclination so to do.

September 8.—I have been reading "Memorials of F. R. Havergal" the last few days, and really they are a wonderful revelation of the possibilities of a life truly "hid with Christ in God." One thing struck me very much. She speaks of the difference of watching against temptation when one realizes

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

the constant cleansing and the keeping power of Christ. "It is the watchfulness of a sentinel when his captain is standing by him on the ramparts, when his eyes are more than ever on the alert for any sign of the approaching enemy, because he knows they can only approach to be defeated." How one longs to experience something of that triumphant faith and walk with God! I must give myself more to prayer and the study of God's Word that I may learn of Christ, and that He may indeed Himself teach me wondrous things concerning Himself, for only then shall I truly know Him, and not merely know about Him. Oh to be rid of this miserable self, pride, selfishness, etc., and to have a heart open to receive Him!

September 26.—God's message to me, as I am almost overcome by the thought of all that lies before me, is: "*My work is for a King*" (Ps. xlv., R.V.).

CHAPTER III

THE MISSIONARY DESIGNATE

DURING the busy days of a student's life Dr. Robertson made time to attend the Chinese classes, under Professor Owen, at King's College, and before he left England he was able to write in Chinese characters. He was one of the few missionaries in China who was able to write his own letters and prescriptions in Chinese, and he laid thus the foundation of that ready knowledge of the language which made him a good preacher in that most difficult of tongues.

This preparation for his life-work was now approaching completion, and in order, as he said, to 'get his hand in,' Dr. Robertson took locums in various places. One of the medical men whom he assisted in this way said, on becoming acquainted with his life purpose: "I cannot understand how Dr. Robertson, with all his brilliant talents, is going to throw himself away on the Chinese." How much depends on our view-point. Such is the fascination of Jesus Christ, that those who have known Him and heard His call, count not their lives dear unto them, so that they may finish their course, which He has marked out, with joy, and fulfil the ministry to mankind, with which He has entrusted them. It was thus with Cecil Robertson. Dr. Stanley Jenkins, who

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

has so quickly followed his friend into the presence of the Lord, and whose love, during those last hours of mortal sickness, was infinitely tender, read his secret truly when he wrote, after the last sad offices had been fulfilled: "Jesus Christ was the beginning and end of everything for Robertson." And the Rev. J. C. Keyte's estimate was as true of him, when he was a missionary designate, as afterwards in the splendid success of his career: "His were the strength and sanity of a healthy public school man, combined with the devotion of a mystic."

It is the custom of the Baptist Missionary Society to allocate their missionaries to circles of friends or clusters of Churches, who agree to be responsible for their support. The missionary thus supported is regarded as their special representative, and as they work for him at home he sends special communications from the field. Thus their enthusiasm is kindled, and their interest maintained. In pursuance of this plan Dr. Robertson was adopted by the Baptist Churches of East London, under the leadership of the Rev. J. H. French, and he was always deeply grateful for the warm sympathy and prayerful fellowship of the ministers and their people, who combined to hold the rope whilst he descended into the dark abysses of non-Christian lands. The Valedictory Meeting was held on Monday, September 27, 1909, in the High Road Chapel, Ilford, under the presidency of Sir Alfred Pearce Gould.

The final Public Designation Service of the group of missionaries, of whom he was one, was held during the Session of the Baptist Union and the Missionary

The Missionary Designate.

Society held at Reading in the autumn of 1909. The charge was delivered in King's Road Chapel by the late Rev. Samuel Vincent, the valedictory prayer being offered by Professor W. Hackney, M.A.

On the first Sunday in October, 1909, also the first Sunday of my second pastorate at Regent's Park Chapel, it fell to me to say good-bye to him at the close of the Communion Service. He came up to the table from the pew where he was sitting with those he loved for the last time, till they sit down together at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. We did not know it then. How mercifully God veils the future! The sweet savour of that service seems to have remained with him. On September 6, 1910, he writes to his sister: "How well I remember dear Mr. Meyer's words at that last Communion Service: 'Behold, I will make thee a new, sharp, threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains and make them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.' It is a blessed thing to have the memory of a service such as that."

On Tuesday, October 12, 1909, he sailed in the *Prince Ludwig* from Southampton. The students of Regent's Park College and many friends saw him off at Waterloo Station. His father and brother went down with him to Southampton; but he said good-bye to his mother in the home—they two alone. On the morning of that day he said that he had been looking for some little verse that he could give them all, and had chosen the words "*He is able.*" In his first letter home to his mother he said: "You will have heard of the send-off at Waterloo. That

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

cheer will live in my ears for many a day. We got off from Southampton with nothing more than the inevitable lump in the throat. . . . Before I finish this letter I want to thank you very much for all your help, perhaps to you unconscious, during the last few days, and to thank you, too, for the two evenings of prayer we all had together." It is thus that parents remain at home to intercede, whilst their boys go forth to the ends of the earth; but who can estimate how much the sacrifice and heart-pangs of women like Cecil Robertson's mother count in the final reckoning?

For the story of his inner life and experiences we are permitted to cull the following extracts from his letters, which, till almost the end, were weekly transmitted to the beloved home-circle, and especially to his mother and father.

October 15, on Board Steamer.—I am very much enjoying reading "George Grenfell." What a magnificent man he must have been!—always seemed to come up smiling despite the greatest difficulties and the most pathetic losses. . . . I know you are remembering us in prayer. Pray especially for our spiritual lives on board ship. I can see that it is easy to get slipshod over private devotions, and *that* is fatal to real life. There are thirty missionaries on board, and we are going to have Family Prayer daily, at 10 a.m., in the saloon, and service on Sunday.

October 22, Naples.—I was delighted to receive the budget of letters with the first news of home.

The Missionary Designate.

We have been to Pompeii, and seen the wonders of that old city, and a great many things of interest . . . There are temptations here to slackness in spiritual things. One has to be very careful, and make time and opportunity for quiet, especially when there is such a crowd on board.

November 9, Colombo.— . . . We can count the time to Shanghai in days now, and then only two or three weeks! But how much I have to learn! It is no light task, looked at from whatever point of view. We know the spiritual force is behind us, but the flesh is a very material thing.

November 15, Hong Kong.—We are expecting to reach Hong Kong about four o'clock this afternoon, and are thankful to our Father for keeping us safe, for on Thursday we were in danger that we knew not of at the time. We afterwards learned that we had got out of the regular course, and at one time when soundings were taken we were in only ten fathoms of water. Though I knew we were in danger, you will be happy to know that beyond a little physical depression I did not have any fears, for I felt that God had some work for some of the dozen or so new missionaries on board, and we always know that His purposes are always best, don't we?

November 25, Shanghai.—Rev. Evan and Mrs. Morgan met us, and took us to their home, after which we went to the Christian Literature Society's new office, where we met Dr. Timothy Richard, and received our letters, for which very many thanks. We were shown over the spacious and

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

well-equipped premises, and in one of the rooms Dr. Richard turned to us and said: "We want to give China the message, the right message, and in the right way. We want to get it into the homes of the officials." He is a grand man; I have been much impressed by him. We went on to his house to tea, and had a pleasant time, and are to spend the evening with him after the Evening Service at the Union Church on Sunday.

December 1, Shanghai.—This is to be my letter of Christmas greeting to you. We shall all be happy, because we shall be in the best communication possible—the communication of love.

December 4, on Board Steamer "Kiang Hsien."—Our first week in China will always be a very happy memory, for all the kind friends there have lavished kindness upon us. On the last day we took tea with Dr. Richard, and had another long and interesting talk. We dined with Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, after which we embarked on this steamer, and left Shanghai about 4.30 a.m.

December 5, Wu-chang.—We are leaving this, our last stopping-place. David Hill worked here for some years. We had a little service this morning in the saloon—just eight of us. The Rev. Arnold Foster led it. He is a fine man, and has been out about thirty-four years. He knew David Hill well for twenty years, and can scarcely talk about him without the tears beginning to well up. He told me that three people, when asked to write about him, quite independently all made use of the same expression—that on one occasion, when he was

The Missionary Designate.

preaching at Hankow, his face appeared as it were the face of an angel.

December 19, en route to Shensi.—This morning we had prayers in Chinese—just we four and the four Chinese. Ellison, who has been out a year and can speak a little Chinese, read from the Gospel, and said a few words, and Mr. Ching led in prayer. That has thrilled me more than anything. What a blessed time it will be when I have led a man to Jesus Christ. I have been looking forward to Sianfu. How glad I shall be when I can get fully into swing there! I shall certainly work hard at the language, and get the first exam. over as soon as possible. I shall have to rub up my medicine and surgery, but the thing that weighs most on my mind is the desire for a closer bond with the Unseen, and a more Christ-like spirit. Pray for me for this. It will be no easier than at home, but I am quite happy in my prospects and happy in the choice of my life-work.

December 24, Sianfu.—We are here at last, and very glad of it. A warm welcome from Jenkins, Young, Watson, Shields, and Mr. and Mrs. Shorrocks. Ellison and I are to stay with the Shorrocks. They are very kind indeed to me, and are making me very comfortable and happy. It was so nice to be called by my Christian name for the first time since I left Southampton. Little Mary Shorrocks is a bright, happy, affectionate lassie.

January, 1910, Sianfu.—We received a warm welcome on arrival, and have now settled down to put our backs into the language. . . . The city itself is

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

an imposing one, with its massive gates, and the walls, which are not less than fourteen yards wide. From East Gate to West Gate it is about three to four miles. Not only is the city a large one, but it has good-sized suburbs outside the gates. One is impressed with the wideness of the streets compared with those of many Chinese cities—wide enough for four carriages to drive side by side. Two important colleges have been put up within the last ten years to carry out the new educational programme. Each contains about 400 students, and is well equipped with special rooms for professors, chemical laboratory, physics laboratory, museum, drill-ground, gymnasium, and tennis-court. The syllabus is also very comprehensive, but the teaching is at present very inefficient, the teachers knowing very little more than the students, and having far too many to teach at once. However, from our point of view, these 800 students are perhaps the most important people in the city. More than any other class they are taking up the cry of "China for the Chinese," and are becoming filled with revolutionary ideas. Our hospital is situated in the middle of the city, and every day there are patients of every class—from the dignified scholar to the crouching beggar. It is fitted for thirty-seven patients, but at the present time we have between sixty and seventy. They clamour for admission, and it is hard to refuse. An Evangelist holds services each morning and evening. A new hospital is to be built in the East Suburb. Our preaching-shop is in a corner of the South Gate Square, where all classes of men from

The Missionary Designate.

all parts of the kingdom congregate, for Sianfu is the capital of the West, and on the great trade-route of the north to Gan-suh and Thibet. We have a further settlement in the East Suburb, where those of us live whose work does not demand our presence in the city, as it is more healthy. Here there is a hall for Sunday services, a girls' school, under the charge of Miss Beckingsale and Miss Franklin, and a boys' school, under the charge of Mr. Shorrocks.

January 8, 1910, Sianfu.—Now for the daily round. Rise about 6.15. Every other day go to prayers at 7, conducted by Mr. Shorrocks for the boys at the school, where I glean a little knowledge of Chinese from the address—just a phrase or two. Breakfast at 8, followed by family prayer, study, reading, till my teacher comes about 10.30. Study with him till 1. Lunch. Walk till 3. Teacher comes at 3.30. Read with him till 5.30 or 6. Do some Bible-study till supper at 6.45, after which read or study till bed-time. This is an average day. On Sunday I go only to morning service. Every Wednesday at 3.30 we have a service for missionaries, conducted by different men, and followed by prayer. My teacher is a nice quiet man, who has been connected with the Mission for two or three years. He has taught two of the ladies, but he is not a Christian. The barrier appears to be opium, of which he smokes a little every day. Pray that he may become a real keen Christian.

January 12, Sianfu.—I am just now living under rather enervating conditions spiritually, not having any external assistance of any sort. Just studying

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

the language and living in the pleasant atmosphere of Mr. Shorrocks's home, and the companionship of the other missionaries. One is rather liable to stagnate, but I want to use this time for studying the Bible and certain of the fundamental truths of our Faith, as well as the language.

January 22, Sianfu.—My visit to these colleges yesterday has impressed me more than anything up to the present. It brings home to one the urgency of the work in this place. We need a man badly who will give all his time to work among these students, cultivating any door that gives access to them, whether sport, teaching, etc. The thought of these hundreds of men, not only in this city, but in many others, all going out to spheres of influence makes one dumb, and is almost staggering. One wants to hurry on so as to be able to get hold of some of them. But in the midst of the urgency comes the steadying word of St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians: "As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation . . . let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." After all, we have to be content to see that our particular bit of the building is likely to be permanent, so that when others come to the finer superstructure, they will have something real and true to work on. But one cannot help looking forward to the day when in those halls and lecture-theatres there will be given lectures on Christian topics—given, perhaps, in association with a College Christian Union.

March 7, Sianfu.—I was reading this morning about the Call of Moses. How remarkable that,

The Missionary Designate.

in spite of all those personal promises, he still wavered. They are great promises for a nervous man when he has a difficult task before him; and when I contemplate my future work I feel something like Moses, for the time will come, when Jenkins goes for his furlough in two and a half or three years, that I shall have full charge of the new hospital, and that will be no light task. I hope, however, that by that time I may have learned the secret that Moses did not learn till later—to look up instead of down.

April 10, Sianfu.—Thank you for all your loving wishes for my birthday. Naturally one looks forward and backward. It is difficult to see real progress in one's spiritual life. Perhaps it is well that we cannot, but we may hope that we are making some unconsciously. I am more than ever convinced that it is character that tells, especially in the little things of daily life. It is good to know of those who are praying for me and my teacher too. He brought me his opium-pipe this week. I had asked him for it, and he gave it me with a sort of nervous reluctance. Poor man, I am afraid that he has felt it very much.

June 12, Sianfu.—I have had the unblushing audacity to start Evening Prayers with the two boys. I read a portion of John, which is in the first year's work, and read a prayer which I had previously prepared and submitted to my teacher. It is not much, but it is a beginning, and makes one feel that one is making a little progress. We had such a nice hymn this evening at the

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

Shorrocks'—No. 637 in B.C. Hymnal. Sing it sometimes on Sunday evenings together.

July 17, Sianfu.—Mr. Shorrock has been giving me a few tests in conversation to see where I am, and if ready for my exam. in September. I am glad to say that he seemed pleased, and a little surprised, I fancy, that I could say as much as I did, whereat I thank God and take courage. I am finding the Evening Prayers easier, and usually make one or two short comments on the portion read.

September 2, Sianfu.—It is the evening before my exam. If all goes well, I start my second year's work after this, which includes the seeing of patients and taking a few services, though I fear that I shall cut a sorry figure at the latter. But it is a blessed thing that it is not the only way of doing work; nor the most effectual, although it has its place. I always think that if only, by God's help, one can cultivate the power of friendship and of tackling men personally, it is really more effective. But how much grace and childlikeness one needs for such work! I was reading yesterday and studying Psalm i. How fine it is that the man who makes the Word of God his daily meditation will be like a firmly-planted tree, always green, always showing signs of life, and always bearing seasonable fruit. It is a great thing always to bear the right fruit at the right season. These strong Bible teachings so help to brace one up. There is another thing that I have been thinking about lately—the holiness of God. We think so much of His love that we tend to conceive of Him as lenient. How one longs to

The Missionary Designate.

become the man of God, completely furnished with every good work, rightly dividing the word of truth.

September 8, Sianfu.—We must learn to find our chief delight in doing our work with all our heart, and in preserving with increasing care our time of communion. How is one, even in a small measure, to attain to the Spirit of Christ without *that!*

Joy! I have had my first out-patient day, and saw about thirty patients. It is true it took me about four hours, but still it is grand to think that at last, after about nine years, I am beginning to get at the actual work.

September 18, Sianfu.—I did a couple of operations the other day at the hospital, and saw the out-patients again this week.

October 9, Sianfu.—It does not seem a year on Thursday that I left England, but so it is. How the time speeds on! Truly it behoves us to buy up the opportunity. It is so easy to get selfish and self-centred out here. One has to watch against losing sight of the main end in view. It is easy to serve one's own ends in language-study, in work, and in companionship, instead of the Master. I forget whether I told you that in the exam. I got ninety-five marks on the four papers we had; for oral work, eighty-four. The total average being eighty-nine, which puts me in what they call the honours division.

November 20, Sianfu.—The Chinese workmen and servants are a great trial to one's patience, and interfere with one's peace of mind. How much one needs to dwell in the secret place of the Most

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

High to counteract these and other tendencies! It is so easy to be other than sweet-tempered out here, as most of our dealings with the Chinese of a business or professional kind are warranted to try the patience of the average man; but this getting out of patience does not further the end in view, and it certainly hinders the progress of the Gospel.

December 10, Sianfu.—To-day my name comes on the B.M.S. Calendar, and I know you will have been thinking of me very specially. May the prayers which will have gone up from many hearts be abundantly answered! If one is not abiding under the shadow of the Almighty, one tends to become awfully impatient, especially in seeing the out-patients—they are so trying; but if we do not show forth patience and love, if our faith and love are not equal to the conditions we have to meet, one cannot help asking what is the good of coming out. This is what we have come for—to try, by the grace of God, to demonstrate that Christianity is a power as well as a doctrine.

December 11, Sianfu.—I am now able to take some active part in the work. My time is still mainly occupied with language-study, but I see out-patients once a week at the hospital, and, in addition, it falls to my share to look after the bcys' school in the East Suburb where most of us are living. We also constantly have in our charge a few opium patients, who live with us for three or four weeks while breaking off the opium habit.

December 18, Sianfu.—Since last writing, circumstances have arisen that will necessitate my

The Missionary Designate.

going to Yenanku in the middle of February. I shall hope to be back by the beginning of May. My teacher will go with me, so that I shall not lose anything in the language-study, and I shall hope to gain experience in the work of the province. My only regret is that the little help I am able to give Dr. Jenkins will be taken away, and more will devolve upon him at a time of the year when we are busiest at the hospital.

February 12, 1911, Sianfu.—We are feeling very much the need of a deeper spiritual life here—I think perhaps as much in ourselves as in our Chinese Christians. You have no idea how easy it is to get half-hearted. People at home are liable to think that all missionaries are such keen people, but it is terribly easy to get slack in real service and devotion. One of our teachers was preaching the other day and saying that he was at a little village where there were many Christians, but only four came. He was staying for the night with a man who was a poor farmer, and they slept on the same k'ang (or brick stove). When he awoke he found that this man had been up some time, spending that early hour in prayer. We all need to spend time in this way, not only because it is a duty, but because prayer is the only source of power.

(We will append here two other extracts on the same subject.)

July 10, Sianfu.—There is one thing I am finding more difficult than I have ever done. I find it so hard to reserve the time needed for personal devo-

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

tion and meditation. But I intend to make a desperate effort for it. To do without it is absolutely fatal. Temptations here are so subtle. It is so easy to lose that calm and equanimity of which there is only one source; and, more than all, one remains at such a standstill. Day after day there seems to be no real progress.

February 28, 1913.—Why should I not always live in the atmosphere of the presence of God and receive still more of His help and inspiration? There are heights and depths in God's fellowship to which we may reach; and God will show and reveal Himself to us that we may have that immediate knowledge. Jesus is the solution of all our difficulties and failures, but the nearer one gets to Him, the more ghastly do our failures and sins appear.

(Ah, happy soul, thou hast thy wish. Thine forever is the unclouded fellowship.—F. B. M.)

CHAPTER IV

AT YENANFU—GETTING INTO HARNESS*

ON February 18, 1911, Dr. Robertson left Sianfu to visit Yen-anfu, in North Shensi. This visit, which extended over six weeks, was an important episode in his career, and was of real significance in the scheme of his life. It was the transition between preparation and full service. He left Sianfu a learner; he returned a full-fledged worker. In the Yen-anfu period we have his whole missionary career in miniature. He did practically nothing on a large scale during those great days of the following year which he had not first done on a small scale in Yen-anfu. It was his first essay forth to Chinese Missionary Service.

The city of Yen-anfu, which governs the prefecture (ten counties) of that name, is situated ten full days' stages north of Sianfu, and eight stages south of the great wall of China, and is in the centre of North Shensi. The journey from Sianfu to Yen-anfu cannot always be done in ten days. If the weather be wet, or the roads bad, a much longer time is required; whereas in the rainy season, when the rivers are swollen, the journey is impossible. For practical purposes, that is, judging by the

* I am indebted to the Rev. E. F. Borst-Smith for this chapter.—F. B. M.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

time required, Yenanku is as far from Sianfu as Peking is from London.

In April, 1910, Yenanku had been opened as a B.M.S. station under the Arthington fund, and in the following autumn Suite-chow, five full days' journey farther north, was opened and occupied by the Rev. and Mrs. J. Watson.

For the whole of the North Shensi Mission there was no doctor. This was felt with special keenness, since North Shensi was one of the areas where the opium habit was abnormally prevalent. By far the greater proportion of adults (women as well as men) were, to a smaller or greater degree, victims to opium. This is not the place to attempt any description of the effects of opium-smoking, except just this: it leads to an agonizing craving that can only be treated medically. So many and so serious are the complications which invariably occur during the cure that the doctors have repeatedly assured non-medical missionaries that they should not attempt to supervise it. In Yenanku large numbers were very desirous of being cured. The production of opium was being prohibited; purchase would soon be prevented; and the anticipation caused great anxiety to many. Thus before Dr. Robertson arrived his visit was looked forward to with the greatest of eagerness.

Of course, language-study was supposed to occupy the great proportion of his time, for he was only at the beginning of his second year, and the local missionaries were anxious not to be responsible for any serious hindrance to this. Yet no one could live in

At Yenifu—Getting into Harness.

the presence of such appalling and appealing need and not be keen to grasp to the full the opportunity afforded by the visit of a doctor. Arrangements were therefore made for the immediate opening of an opium refuge, so that not one day should be lost. No one was persuaded to enter; only those were admitted whose desire for cure was strong, such strong desire being amongst the first essentials of the cure. The rooms chosen were at the back of the street preaching-hall. This arrangement made it possible for the Evangelist in charge to exercise constant supervision, without detriment to his regular duties. The available accommodation was fully taxed, about twenty being under regular treatment. None of the patients were permitted to leave the premises. The weakened will would not be able to resist the temptations of liberty. But this imprisonment had its distinct positive advantages; it meant the constant companionship of the Chinese Evangelist—a Christian of fine character—frequent intercourse with the missionary, as well as the attention of Dr. Robertson.

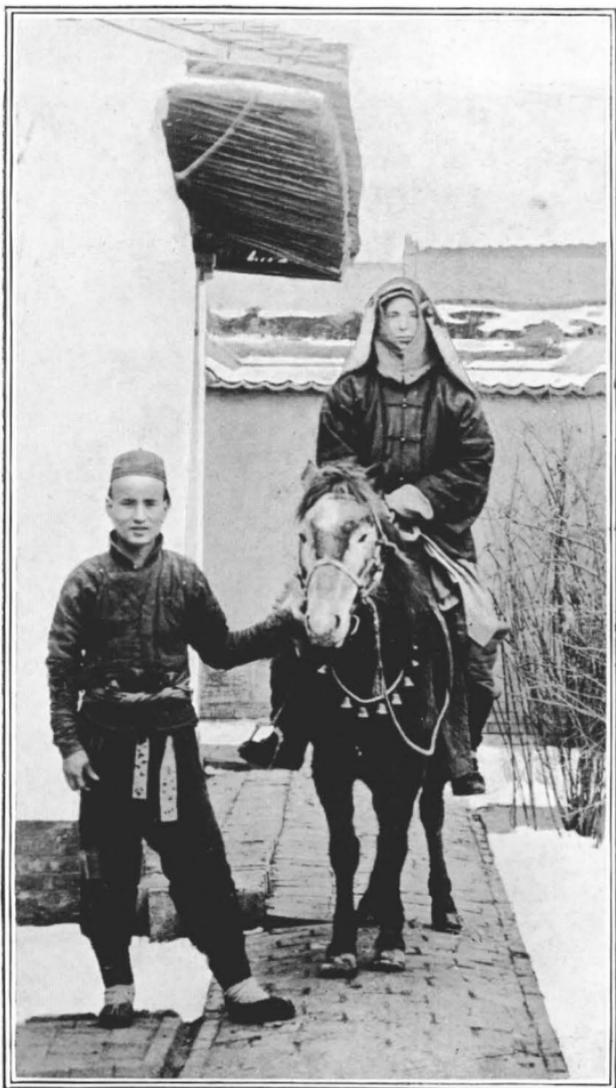
Since idleness exposes to temptation, occupation was afforded. Some were able to have their own work sent in to them each day. But everyone had his daily Scripture lesson to prepare, and all attended morning and evening worship. The Master's three-fold method of preaching, teaching, and healing was employed. The patients came under the influence of the whole Gospel, of work as well as word, and under the spell of the noble Christian character of Dr. Robertson.

The only exception to this Christian prison

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

system was a woman who some months earlier had come to a knowledge of the truth through the influence of the local missionary's wife, and who had since come into her employ. This woman's cure was carried on simultaneously with household duties. Her case is of interest because her faith not only made her whole, but brought her into conflict with her relatives, who persecuted her in many ways, attributing their many family sorrows to her confession of faith. But so completely had she been won that she stood steadfast; and afterwards so great was her confidence in Dr. Robertson that when any of her friends became ill, she would ask the missionary's wife to write to him, describing symptoms and requesting remedies.

Then, in addition to work amongst opium patients, there was the more general medical missionary work. From the time Yenifu had been occupied as a mission station, the missionary and his wife had done all in their power to alleviate suffering. Certain days had been appointed, and a small dispensary fitted out. The same time and place were adopted by Dr. Robertson, and large numbers of people with all kinds of diseases came. The news very quickly spread, not only over the whole city, but throughout the prefecture, that there was a doctor in Yenifu, and the numbers that came were not only large, but representative of the whole area. And then, not only sick people, but the friends of the sick people, came on behalf of those whose illnesses were too serious to permit of their being brought, requesting the doctor to visit their homes. I have no record of the



DR. ROBERTSON STARTING ON THE JOURNEY TO
YENANFU.

At Yenanku—Getting into Harness.

number of these visits, but they were very numerous. I have often been a witness of the patience and kindness, as well as skill, displayed on these occasions. If the patients were in the city, the Doctor would usually walk; if some miles away, he would ride his horse. By these visits he became one of the most familiar and the best-loved figures in the neighbourhood. It is quite safe to say, with deep reverence, as well as exact truth, that the general verdict regarding these journeys was: "He went about doing good."

The whole argument and value of medical missions was illustrated. The work thus done *was* preaching of the Gospel; one could hardly imagine any better exemplification of it. Such work was an outward and visible sign of the beneficent heart of the Gospel. It was not an advertisement *about* the Gospel, but an actual expression of the Gospel itself. To alleviate suffering and cure disease is surely a sufficient end in itself; but the simple fact is, it did not end there. By means of the bodily avenue the soul was actually reached. In all directions hearts hitherto closed were opened.

But Dr. Robertson was friend as well as physician. The social instinct was strong in him; there was no suggestion of the recluse in his conduct. The gift of sociability is invaluable in China, where everything is inaugurated with a feast. And it was not long before Dr. Robertson went to his first Chinese feast. In Yenanku there is always a long series of banquets during the first six weeks of the Chinese New Year. During my own residence there I was rarely at home for a midday meal during that period.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

Dr. Robertson reached us toward the end of this series of festivities, and was therefore included in the invitations.

At a Chinese feast the new missionary is on his trial, and the test is by no means an easy one. The dishes are strange; some, at first, unpalatable; most are indigestible. Adaptability in food, as in all else, is one of the first qualifications of the missionary. Taste must be sacrificed to tact, digestion to duty. Here the faddist fails; but Dr. Robertson was no faddist. Chopsticks presented no difficulty to one so skilful. He did not succumb to the easy temptation of making a few judicious selections. He took what was set before him (fat pork as well), asking no questions, either for conscience' sake or any other. And he was *persona grata* with all.

It was at Yenifu also that Dr. Robertson had his first intercourse with officials. We little imagined when he accompanied me to meet our Yenifu officials that before that year passed away the highest officials of the whole Province of Shensi would gratefully recognize Dr. Robertson as benefactor. Yenifu was a suitable place to begin such intercourse. It is essentially an official city. Although commercially unimportant, the Head Mandarin of the whole prefecture (comprising ten counties) resided there. No better training-place could be imagined. During and since the Revolution a different type of person has come into power, but in the spring of 1911 the Manchu dynasty still stood, and the etiquette was elaborate and complicated. It was with considerable hesitancy that

At Yenanku—Getting into Harness.

Dr. Robertson prepared for the first visit, but his unflinching courtesy and essential gentlemanliness soon made those of the classes, as those of the masses, his friends.

His first visit was to the Prefect—the civil and practically autocratic ruler of the whole Yenanku prefecture, obviously a man of commanding influence. The Prefect spoke in terms of high praise of the purpose of Dr. Robertson's visit—"to do good to our citizens, and lead them away from their great vice,"—and promised any help in his power. Next our Doctor went to see the County Magistrate—civil ruler of the central of the ten counties. This official had, during the whole of his term in Yenanku, been the familiar friend of the resident missionary. With him Dr. Robertson formed a genuine friendship, and there arose between them sincere mutual admiration and respect. But the Yenanku official whom he came to know most intimately of all was the head *military* Mandarin for the whole prefecture. This official was unusually progressive. Perhaps no better evidence of this could be given than the fact that he sometimes borrowed my bicycle! In things Chinese, he had been my own "guide, philosopher, and friend," and he occasionally attended public worship. He studied the New Testament, but was especially attracted by our hymn-book, which was always on his guest-room table. With him Dr. Robertson's friendship was immediate and constant, and both in the private rooms of the barracks and in the missionary compound they often shared meals. Their friendship continued after

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

Dr. Robertson had left Yen-anfu. This was not owing to the fact that the official was suffering from tuberculosis, and that the treatment was carried on by correspondence through the missionary for subsequent months, although this, of course, formed an extra link.

Just a few days before Dr. Robertson left Yen-anfu the local missionary invited the Military Official and the County Magistrate to a farewell banquet. The date was arranged so as to synchronize with the passing through Yen-anfu of other missionaries. The hours that followed were full of enjoyable intercourse. Dr. Robertson, I remember, remarked that this was the easy equivalent of much of our general social intercourse with friends at home. Dr. Robertson afterwards sent, through myself, to the Military Official a copy of the photograph taken that day, and it afterwards adorned the walls of his guest-room.

In this branch of life Dr. Robertson showed himself a full man—robust, generous, cultured, human, happy. Looking back, one cannot fail to see in all this friendly intercourse with the officials of Yen-anfu the providential training of the man, who, later in that same year, would be the associate of the highest officials of the province—first Imperial, and then Republican.

One inference from the foregoing is that Dr. Robertson's knowledge of the Chinese language was, for one who had only been fifteen months in the country, unusually good. He certainly knew very much more than his textbook had taught him. Perhaps a doctor has, at the beginning of his Chinese

At Yenanku—Getting into Harness.

career, more enforced conversation than his non-medical colleagues. And although the long and rambling remarks of patients have often little enough to do with their disease or its treatment, they are yet rich in material for the student of the colloquial language. In any case, Dr. Robertson's notebook was never far away, and in addresses and conversations he was always on the lookout for new words and phrases. But here is another evidence of the rapid progress he had made in language-study: on his way from Sianfu to Yenanku he gave his first address in Chinese, and he redelivered this address early in his stay at Yenanku. Doctors always seem to be the keenest evangelists. I have never known a medical missionary so engrossed in his work of healing that he was indifferent to that of preaching. Such men only exist in the fears of those of little faith.

I remember that service very clearly. The language was a surprise. The pronunciation was distinct and accurate; the idiom unusually true; and the vocabulary really wealthy. The sermon was the man. The subject was "Faith in the Heavenly Father." It came with all the authority of deep personal experience. It expressed those very qualities that made Dr. Robertson loved by all who knew him. Sane and saintly, strong and sincere, simple and spiritual, the sermon spoke deeply to all who heard it. His preaching and his practising were all of a piece. Whether in the pulpit, the dispensary, the street, or the home, he was the same lovable, attractive, noble man.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

And what impression was made by his six weeks' residence in Yenanku? Some time before he went the opium patients approached me expressing their desire to make some kind of presentation. They soon decided that it should take the form of a carved inscription—the Chinese equivalent of a printed address—to hang over the door of the dispensary where the medical work was done. Suggestions for the wording were invited. A phrase containing four characters in Wenli (the literary language) was required. The literal translation of the one ultimately accepted is: "Save world; spent heart." It would not be taking undue licence with the four characters to translate them, "He saved others; himself he could not save." And looking back now upon the choice of inscription, it seems prophetic, "signifying by what death he should glorify God." In smaller characters the names of the contributors were engraved. Had their wishes been carried out there would have been great excitement and display on the occasion of the presentation. The Chinese love a festival of any kind, and it so happened that one of the patients was actually the principal bugler in the Yenanku military band. They were all very disappointed when they discovered that Dr. Robertson did not approve of a procession through the streets of the city, headed by a military band. The flourish of trumpets and beating of drums brought no pleasure to him. So in deference to his wishes this point was conceded, and a simpler ceremony arranged. In his response Dr. Robertson took the opportunity of delivering an earnest Christian ad-

At Yenanku—Getting into Harness.

dress, inviting the patients to faith in the Saviour who would keep them from opium and every other evil. And over the little dispensary in Yenanku the inscription still hangs, the first he ever received, and for the first piece of real medical missionary work ever done in North Shensi.

At the time no one imagined that before another year passed the highest authorities in the provincial capital would count no honour too great as recognition of his services.

On Thursday evening (April 12) he bade farewell to his last batch of opium patients, handing them over to my care. I well remember the earnest words he spoke to them then. On Friday morning at four he left Yenanku to return to Sianku. The furlough of the late Dr. H. Stanley Jenkins was due, and the condition of his health demanded a speedy return to England, so Dr. Robertson hastened to relieve him. It was characteristic that on the first day he covered two stages. He sent his own horse forward on the preceding day to wait at the end of the first stage; then he borrowed one from the Military Mandarin, who also arranged for refreshment to be prepared for him at the stage, and so by a relay of horses he saved one day. Towards the end of the journey he repeated the same feat. He arrived in Sianku in time to receive from Dr. Jenkins the responsibility for the medical work there, and he was still there when Dr. Jenkins returned in the end of 1912 to do a few weeks' work together, before both were transferred to the higher service.

But his departure from Yenanku on that Friday

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

morning did not mean the end of his influence there. Before another seven months had passed, Yenanku became the scene of wild and indescribable confusion and panic. Some of the oldest inhabitants, who remember the great Mohammedan rebellion of sixty years ago, which so completely devastated the two whole provinces of Shensi and Kansuh that afterwards there were not enough men to till the fields, said that even the panic of those days was not comparable to that of the autumn of 1911. Of foreigners there was but the one missionary, with his wife, and the little one born during Dr. Robertson's visit. The head military official was concerned for their safety, and sent two of his most reliable soldiers to keep the gate of the mission premises. One was a Christian "learner," the other, one of Dr. Robertson's opium patients.* These were selected on account of the personal claim it was felt the missionaries had on them. The ex-opium patient was a most useful man. He was, on the one hand, sympathetic towards us, and, on the other, a member of the Society of Elder Brethren—the secret society which caused (and yet sometimes prevented) so much havoc in Shensi. Often at nights did he convey messages from myself to the man who usurped the Prefect's office, and he was certainly one of those who contributed to our safety.

To be associated with us during that two months' "reign of terror" meant to be exposed to danger, yet the woman patient already referred to remained quite faithful through all. Several others of Dr.

* See "Caught in the Chinese Revolution," p. 47.

At Yenanku—Getting into Harness.

Robertson's patients came into prominence during the early weeks of panic, and there is no doubt that the memory of his great kindness to them exercised a restraining influence.

As the record of his life and work would never be complete without the story of what he did in Yenanku, so the history of the Yenanku mission will not be fully told without some account of that visit. The relation between Dr. Robertson and Yenanku was intimate and mutual. He bestowed great benefits on that city, and it in its turn had its share in training him. North Shensi never left his thoughts. Later, when peace was restored, and the reopening of work in North Shensi was again being seriously considered, it was thought well to concentrate the staff of Suite-chow and Yenanku in one place, and a doctor was promised for the proposed reinforced station. Dr. Robertson immediately volunteered. He was fast becoming the idol of Sianku, the provincial capital. Many honours were heaped upon him, and he had acquired great influence. But he readily offered to leave the place of his fame for quiet work in a non-conspicuous sphere.

Nothing has been said of the benefit derived by the Yenanku missionaries from his visit, and no words can express it. But that period stands out clearly in the memory as one of fellowship with one whose purity of character was not repellent, whose love was robust, whose life inspired the prayer:

“ O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in his train.”

CHAPTER V

ON THE EVE OF THE GREAT REVOLUTION

April 30, Sianfu.—I can assure you that the knowledge that one is being constantly remembered in prayer is a source of real comfort and strength. I have not a moment's hesitation in saying that I am not one whit less keen about service. It may be that my outlook has altered somewhat, and my ideas on certain things also; but for the actual work, both the medical and that which is purely and directly for the kingdom of Christ Jesus, I am keener to become of the greatest use possible! The scope, on account of its extent, is bewildering, and it is difficult to know how to cope with it.

May 16, Sianfu.—You must try to picture me in different quarters, as I have moved this week into the hospital. The Jenkinsons have left, and they both need a good rest.* We are very busy, but the more one has to do, the more one can do. I have the daily seeing of in-patients in the morning. Out-patients on Fridays. Operations on Saturdays. Conducting prayers on Tuesdays and Saturdays for in-patients; and I want also to give a short address to out-patients on the day that I see them. In addition,

* The work at the hospital, therefore, largely devolved on Dr. Robertson.

On the Eve of the Great Revolution.

I have all the administration and accounts of the hospital to see to.

May 17, Sianfu.—I feel more than ever the necessity of keeping the great aim in view. It is not difficult to let it slide, but one must keep it ever before oneself and the helpers. One needs also habitual self-control. Of all places in the world this is one of the best as a school of patience, but if one gives way to irritability, it is bad for one's spiritual life and influence, not to mention one's physical condition.

May 28, Sianfu.—To think of the day when we shall all be home together seems almost too much at this distance, but I was thinking of the Jenkinsees to-day, who must now be nearing England, and wondering what their thoughts and feelings would be, and those of the loved ones who are awaiting them. Blessed is the man who has been in the habit of cultivating the companionship of Jesus Christ, and who does not feel the loss of companionship that otherwise is bound to come to him!

July 23, Sianfu.—Despite the heat, there are some things at this time of the year which are really beautiful. The blue sky is lovely just now; it is such a beautiful deep blue, and the green of the trees against it is so pretty. The language-study goes slowly. It will take years before anything like proficiency is obtained. The weeks come and go. The Sundays seem continually chasing one another, but one cannot help wondering how far "Progress" can be written across one's life. The nearer we get to the top, the steeper the way seems.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

July 30, Sianfu.—We have had some encouragement with the opium patients lately. Three who broke off the opium with our help are now attendants at the services, and I have recently heard from Mr. Borst-Smith that two of the opium patients at Yen-anfu have since joined the Church. The opium prevented them doing so previously. One does desire to see not only the good general impression of the Gospel as the result of staying here, but to see the patients gaining a personal faith.

August 3, Sianfu.—It is easy to be satisfied with less than the best. Why should we let the work make demands on our energy and time that other men would not put into it? But, as Thomas à Kempis has it, "There are many professed lovers of Jesus, but few bearers of His Cross."

September 9, Sianfu.—I have been having my exam., and got on better than I expected. Eighty-four for my sermon, and eighty and ninety-two for my two papers. I am staying with the Shorrocks this week-end, and going into the hospital again on Monday. There is a sense of freedom in being away from it. I am really very fit, and continue to have a good appetite and to sleep well. The fact that I have worked fairly continuously for two years and kept so fit is a good sign for the future and something to be thankful for. I have been treating the son of one of our language teachers for heart disease. He is very much better, and his father is going to be baptized and become a member of the Church. There is a woman in a room near this. I have just heard her praying, probably for her husband,

On the Eve of the Great Revolution.

who broke off his opium but has taken to it again.

September 22, Sianfu.—The new church has been opened. Yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow meetings are on. The place has been full every time. To many of the visitors it was the first service, but all were quiet and orderly. This afternoon it was the business meeting, when matters relating to Church membership were discussed—such as family prayer, lawsuits, Sunday observance, schools, patriotism, the importance of giving. Many of the problems that faced Paul are repeated on the mission field. . . . It appears that there is trouble in Szechuan. The report we have is that the people have risen, three Yamens have been burned to the ground, and all the foreigners ordered away. In the meantime we are perfectly quiet here, a fact which is emphasized by 1,500 soldiers being sent from here to quell the disturbance.

October 1, Sianfu.—We have telegrams to-day from Ching-King that the telegraph wires from the capital are cut, and that the soldiers in the city have gone over to the revolutionaries.

October 15, Sianfu.—Just as I am writing this letter I have had the news from Hankow that there is considerable feeling against the Manchu dynasty. Everything is quite quiet here, and we have heard of nothing at all disturbing as taking place in this province. I am sure that you will be at rest with regard to us. There has been no feeling against the foreigner as such. But apart from that we are not our own; all our affairs are His and entrusted to Him.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

October 22, Sianfu.—I have been thinking much about you this week, and hope that you have not been anxious about us up here. We heard from Hankow yesterday that a battle was impending, but that all foreigners were being protected. We have also had a copy of the Manifesto issued by the leader of the Revolutionaries to his followers. The main points are—(1) To overthrow the present dynasty. (2) To behead all who oppose the Revolution, or conceal officials in their houses; all who loot and commit outrages of any sort; and all who do any harm to foreigners. (3) To reward all who help the rebels in any way, either by giving food, ammunition, or information about the enemy; and all who protect foreigners and foreign concessions. So you see from that that they are keen to protect foreigners. The officials certainly will do no harm to foreigners. The only people who may be the riff-raff, but these will be intimidated by the Manifesto. There is no indication of any trouble here. Practically all the soldiers and students belong to this revolutionary society, so, with practically the whole army on their side, one would think that there is little fear of a great deal of fighting.

* * * * *

These words were evidently written in the early morning of that memorable Sunday, and at noon the Revolution broke out at Sianfu. This was a very notable and formative experience in Dr. Robertson's life, and we may suspend our quotations from his letters, confessing that their compilation and transcription have been a source of profound

On the Eve of the Great Revolution.

blessing, and gather up some of the impressions that he had produced. "His life," said Miss Beckingsale, who has now joined him in the presence of Christ, "was a benediction, his friendship a precious memory. I never knew him to say a word or do a deed which one could have wished otherwise." "Everybody loved him," says another, "and everybody spoke highly of his character and influence." "He was one of those charming men," writes the Rev. Evan Morgan, "that you occasionally meet with in life; his personality and gifts had a great and attractive beauty. He had unique opportunities, and availed himself of them to the full." "He was amongst the best of physicians, the most lovable of men, a man without a critic, admired and loved by all; the most transparent of Christians, the hero of the Revolution, the servant of Jesus Christ. His memory will always remain as a fragrance, his influence an abiding element in our mission. What a strong, manly physique was his, while his spiritual life flowed in a deep strong current."

One of the outstanding features in the records which we have been privileged to handle was his yearning after the souls of men. Too many of us are content to do our Christian work without the definite aim and purpose which animated him. Whether it was his personal attendant, "the boy," who was "such a real Christian"; or a poor beggar who seemed to be awakening to a better life; or a student that had undergone an operation; or some soldiers; or the high official, whatever he did for their physical well-being was subordinate to a

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

consuming desire to win each and all for Christ. "Our concern," he writes, "about their sad physical condition ought to make one feel that these folk are living in just the same sad condition of spiritual darkness when they might be enjoying so much light.

We get so concerned about what we see, but are so callous about what we only conceive with the spiritual vision. If we could only have a clearer spiritual vision, we should see things which would make us wake up a little more!"

Dr. Robertson's one aim was to find his all in Christ. "One needs just to be wholly satisfied with Him, then it does not matter where one is. One sees some married folks so wholly satisfied with each other. Someone recently said to me in a letter: 'It is nice to find one's first thought is of another, and not of one's miserable self.' I could not help feeling that this ought to be one's relationship to our Blessed Lord. To find our greatest joy in Him; to think of Him first. This is the secret of real joy and peace, and an even mind and temper in all circumstances."

He was ever yearning after more spirituality and a deeper experience of God. "I do want to get things in their right perspective, to think more of the real things, of the things that are well-pleasing to Him. Even here it is easier to think more of what one's fellows think, and to give oneself little pats on the back. Oh the littleness of one's own heart! May Christ fill us with His gentleness, which can make us great." He was also specially proficient in the art of prayer and fellowship with God that

On the Eve of the Great Revolution.

must have strangely moved and inspired his fellow-missionaries.

The peace of God was with him: "What a wonderful thing is the peace of God! No wonder Paul said of it, 'That passeth all understanding.' I had to take the united prayer meeting yesterday, and took that as my subject. I used to feel that if only we could maintain our self-control so as to be always even-tempered and calm, it would be good, but I feel now that all that is given us by this wonderful peace of God." This peace arose in part from his habit of seeing the will of God in all the circumstances of his life. It was his habitual attitude. "Sometime I must write out all the special providences and guidances that we have experienced. People talk about coincidences, but when there is a plan, there must be Someone to formulate the plan and keep things up to time, and that is what I have experienced right along the way—everything timed!"

We will conclude this chapter with a character sketch from one who knew him intimately during the earlier stages of his career in China:

"I think his chief characteristics were thoroughness, humility and teachableness, and a very real inner life of communion with God, which, however, he only spoke of at rare moments.

"His *thoroughness* was seen in everything he did. He was as careful in treating the minor ailments of the schoolboys as he was in a severe operation. The same trait came out in his study of the language; he was not content, as most are, to merely recognize the complicated Chinese 'characters' (ideographs),

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

but set himself from the beginning to write them from memory. He was thus able to write the whole of his first language exam., and nearly all the second, in 'character,' instead of using the 'romanized' spelling, as most of us do.

"He had the *humility* that so often accompanies the highest attainments. In any hints or help given in his study of Chinese, he never needed telling twice, but at once adopted the suggestion, and made it his own by use. The same trait came out in other ways—for instance, in a letter he wrote to Mr. Shorrock, who was rather fagged at the time, and in which he begged him to get rest and change, he added: 'I would urge this, not so much from a professional standpoint, but, if you will let me do so, as a son, since you have allowed me to take that position in your home.'

"His *inner life* was always deep, though there was an utter absence of anything like 'cant'; and it was, perhaps, the fear of this which kept him from speaking of it much; when he did, it was always with great diffidence, yet with intense reality. One or two talks in the early days are very vivid to me, especially one on the need, in a missionary's life, of guarding against loss of power through lack of time for prayer and communion. 'But,' he added, 'I always feel there is need to guard against looking upon a few moments of prayer as a sort of fetish! One is almost tempted to feel that the mere fact of having prayed—perhaps very hurriedly—will keep everything smooth and happy during the day, and this seems almost to amount to something super

On the Eve of the Great Revolution.

stitious!' During his first year he drew up a list of subjects for daily prayer to be used by all our Shensi staff, including all the stations in the province, and the various departments of work, as well as the workers in the other two provinces. At our weekly prayer meeting he always tried to have some definite requests for prayer ready, saying he felt we might easily become vague and formal otherwise, and so lose the stimulus, as well as the direct results, we needed. Later, during the winter of the Revolution, he induced the hospital assistants to meet for prayer constantly, with the result that many of them were definitely led to decide for Christ, and others who were already Christians were brought to live more Christ-like lives, greatly to the efficiency and smooth working of all the departments. The *main* object—leading patients to Christ—was always before him, and no professional keenness could damp his eagerness for this. His professional thoroughness sometimes made the difficulties of proper equipment on the mission field very trying to bear. When he was with the troops at the fighting front in December, 1911, he wrote: 'It is hard to keep sweet with all the conditions here, and the lack of any decently prepared place to work in, as well as the lack of time for quiet, or a quiet place to oneself!' During his first months he had a teacher who took opium, and was not at first willing to get rid of it. But Cecil persuaded him to try, and spent much time and pains in helping him, using his small stock of Chinese meantime in helping the man to understand that only Christ could bring him through such a trial.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

He was always on the lookout for references in the daily study—of New Testament or other books—that might be utilized for this end.

“His *unswerving devotion to duty* was brought out very clearly during the Revolution. He never had a moment’s hesitation about his duty to stay behind when others left, and was ready at once when asked to go out to places of difficulty and danger with the troops. One of the trials he had to bear at the front was being forced to retire with the army from a town that the leaders abandoned before attack, though he stayed to the last, and was quite prepared to remain behind alone with the wounded. He was absolutely unmovable when he had made up his mind that a certain course was right, and we found this out very clearly last June, when we were all preparing to go down to the coast for a much-needed holiday. At the last moment, only two or three days before we were all to start, the plans that had been made for the carrying on of the work in the hospital fell through; others thought that the convalescents could do very well for a few days in the care of the assistants, until a substitute could arrive; but he was not to be turned aside, and stayed behind, at a considerable sacrifice to himself, and much to our distress, as we feared it would mean giving up his holiday altogether. Afterwards we all came to see that he was right, and the impression made by his staying on for those ten days alone will not be lost.”

CHAPTER VI

A BRIEF VIEW OF THE REVOLUTION*

THE main outlines of the Chinese Revolution of 1911-12 are known to all interested in that great continent country. But while the eyes of the world were fixed upon Peking and Wuchang, those of us who were in far-inland provinces were experiencing many of the horrors of war and anarchy little known even by the outside world of China. It was with a good deal of surprise, therefore, that we read in a leading Shanghai paper in the spring of 1912 of the wonderfully "bloodless" Revolution that had taken place, it being stated that only about 5,000 in all had lost their lives! The writer was in complete ignorance of conditions inland, for in the province of Shensi alone probably as many as 15,000 Manchus perished during the last week in October, and it is estimated that an equal number of Chinese were killed during the fighting that followed the first outbreak, making a death-roll for that one province alone of 30,000!

Shensi, the province that lies "West of the Pass," as its name denotes, is reached by a long journey of some 1,500 miles from the coast, and is on the highway between Peking and Thibet. To the west, only

* Contributed by Mrs. Shorrocks.—F. B. M.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

Kansu separates it from the Great Closed Land. On its eastern borders, beyond which lies the province of Honan, stands the fortress of T'ung Kuan, rightly called the "Key to Shensi"—Sianfu, the wealthy capital, being the lock which the key opens. Chinese travellers from the coast speak of entering "the land of barbarians" when they pass through its forbidding gates, and leave behind many of the amenities of semi-foreignized China, such as electric light and macadamized roads, railways, and rickshas. Yet to those of us who have made our home there for many years, and to the natives of the province, it is a pleasant land. The climate is much like that of Canada, the dryness making the extremes of heat and cold comparatively easy to bear. The soil is fertile, and except when drought prevails, two harvests in the year may be regularly reaped from the same land. The staple crops are wheat, cotton, millet, and, until the prohibitive campaign of recent years, opium, which is the most lucrative of all, and was widely grown for export to Shantung and other coast provinces.

Shensi is rightly looked upon as the cradle of the Chinese race; and the tomb of the mythical Fu Hsi is said to be amongst the Northern Hills. From time immemorial the province has been the scene of rebellion and bloodshed, of devastating flood and famine. The capital, Sianfu, "the City of Western Peace," is the metropolis of North-West China, and teems with busy throngs of merchants and travellers. At the beginning of the Christian era it was the capital of the Empire, and it was to this historic city

A Brief View of the Revolution.

that the Manchu Court fled in 1900, when the avenging armies of the West entered Peking after the Boxer outrages. Sianfu has the honour to contain the oldest monument to Christianity to be found in China—the celebrated Nestorian Tablet, which was erected in the seventh century, and unearthed a thousand years later, outside the West Gate. It has now a place of honour in the Hall of Tablets in Sianfu, amongst other relics equally venerable, though none of greater interest to the student of Christian missions. At the present time Sianfu is one of the most important and most cosmopolitan cities in all China. In its crowded thoroughfares one may meet men from every one of the eighteen provinces, and for the last 200 years it has been specially remarkable for its large Manchu population, which probably reached the number of 20,000. Amongst these were many retired officials, who, after amassing considerable wealth—generally at the expense of those over whom they ruled—made their homes amongst their own people, within the Manchu precincts, the walls of which enclosed nearly one-third of the whole city of Sianfu.

It is striking to note that the ultimate cause which brought the Manchus to China in the seventeenth century was the success of a Shensi rebel leader, who, after repeated victories over the Imperial troops, actually found himself in possession of Peking, the ruling Emperor—the last of the Ming dynasty—having committed suicide at his approach. It was to oust this man and to reinstate the Mings that the Manchus were invited to come to the help of the loyal

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

remnant; and having helped successfully, they resolved to remain as rulers! Remembering this, there is some irony in the story of the Revolution of 1911 in Shensi, and the dire punishment meted out there to the descendants of these same Manchus who triumphed 260 years earlier over the usurper from the far west.

The news of the Revolution which began in Wuchang on October 10, 1911, reached us in Sianfu on the 15th, and a week later the storm broke there also. At noon on Sunday, October 22, the Chinese troops, led by Revolutionaries, poured into the city from the barracks outside the West Suburb, and secured and closed the four great city gates. The next step was to seize the arsenal, where a large consignment of modern quick-firing rifles was waiting for distribution to the Manchu garrison, who were to have received them only four days later! These were now dealt out, not only to the rebel soldiers, of whom there were only about 1,500, but to all and sundry—common citizens, released prisoners, the usually feared and distrusted Mohammedans, even the beggars on the streets—to anyone, in fact, who would go and fight the hated Manchus. Having obtained their weapons, many made full use of the opportunity thus given them of paying off old scores, and of enriching themselves at the expense of their fellow-citizens; and in a short time the whole city was given up to looting and violence.

Banks and business houses suffered alike, and it is estimated that in one street alone 4,000,000 taels (about £500,000) were stolen on the first night. Had

A Brief View of the Revolution.

some plan of guarding the banks been devised at the beginning, the provincial exchequer would have been well supplied, and the authorities saved from the great straits they were afterwards put to for want of money; but the inexperience of the leaders—most of them very young, and many of them still in their student days—and the suddenness of the outbreak at the last, were responsible for this mistake, as well as for others that had more serious consequences, and might have been avoided by a little more forethought during the early hours of the Revolution.

Meanwhile, in the Manchu quarter, which occupied the north-east portion of the city, the garrison, though it numbered 5,000 trained men, was speedily overcome, for they were armed only with obsolete weapons, and were powerless to defend themselves against the new magazine rifles in the hands of the Revolutionaries. The whole Manchu city was soon in flames, and then for days followed a wholesale massacre of men, women, and children, the story of which is too horrible to detail. Nor should it be laid to the door of the Revolutionary party proper. Shensi is one of the strongholds of the Ko Lao Hui, or "Ancient Society of Brethren," a secret society having as its avowed object the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty, and incidentally the expulsion of all foreigners from the Celestial Empire, the term "foreigner" being applied indiscriminately to all non-Chinese residents, of whatever nationality. Though primarily a patriotic association, it had fallen greatly from the original high ideals of its founders

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

and earlier members, and in Shensi at least the name of "Ko Lao Hui" has long been a synonym for robbery and violence of every description, and has struck terror to the minds of the peasantry. The overwhelming numbers of these "Brethren" greatly embarrassed the genuine Revolutionaries, known as the "Ke Ming Tang," though the latter, being comparatively few in number, could not hope to be successful without the help of the Ko Lao Hui. But they had not realized the bitterness of hatred to the foreigner and to the Manchu rulers which was inbred in the "Brethren," and which had been encouraged by them in the common people throughout the province. To this factor must be attributed the brutal massacre of the helpless Manchus, as well as the attack on one of the mission houses outside Sianfu, where six Swedish children and two adults were done to death. Other foreigners were in great danger for a time, and the marvel is that no further casualties occurred during the time of anarchy that followed throughout the whole province. Later on, after the first heat of mad revenge had passed, and more merciful counsels prevailed, a compromise was arrived at between the two parties, and the "Brethren" agreed to subscribe to the general programme of the Revolution, as drawn up for the whole of China, and to declare themselves thereby the friends of foreigners. Henceforth we were protected by Ke Ming Tang and Ko Lao Hui alike, the two parties vying with one another in their desire to befriend and help us, and even to shower honours upon us!

A Brief View of the Revolution.

When a few weeks later rumours of the state of affairs in Shensi, and the danger of the foreigners there, reached the coast, a band of nine young men, consisting of seven Britons, one American, and one Swede, and since known as the "Shensi Relief Expedition," left Peking at the end of November, and just after Christmas arrived in Sianfu, bringing with them several families who had been isolated for nearly two months in the north of the province. They expected to take all of us to the coast, and many were the protests when it was found that some had no wish to be so rescued, but were determined to remain behind. In the end a party of forty-one foreigners started for Peking on January 4, leaving in Sianfu a little band of five workers (three men and two women), and two children.

The story of the six months that followed their departure cannot be told in full here. But those of us who remained behind will never forget the experiences of those days, nor cease to be thankful that we were allowed to stay on, and do what little we could to help those who suffered. We were able to give immediate relief to the survivors of the Manchus, now homeless and destitute. The majority of these were old women, who had formerly been in affluent circumstances, and had never known a want in all their lives. The heart-breaking scenes we saw, and the piteous tales we heard, will never fade from our minds, nor the remembrance that through our presence a large proportion of the two or three thousand survivors were relieved, and the authorities finally persuaded to make some tardy

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

provision for their needs, though this did not come to pass till the following May, after a long winter of suffering and privation, when only the foreigners dared give them help or shelter. The most pathetic moment came just before we left last June, when nearly 200 of these poor Manchus presented us with a banner, bought out of the pittance they had begged on the streets for their daily food, and inscribed with words of gratitude for the help given in their hour of need.

The first result of the overthrow of all authority in Sianfu was a reign of terror throughout the countryside. In the general anarchy that followed, might was right, and deeds of violence were committed on all sides. Then a new danger appeared in the approach of two Imperial armies, which poured into the province to avenge the slaughter of the Manchus and reduce Shensi to subjection. From the east, Yüan Shih K'ai (then acting for the Manchu Government) sent a force of 10,000 foreign-drilled troops, splendidly equipped with the latest thing in modern rifles and artillery. From the west came a composite army of Mohammedans, Manchus, and Chinese, later reinforced by hordes of semi-civilized tribes from beyond the Great Wall—in all numbering 20,000 by the end of February—and led by a Manchu, late Viceroy of Shensi and Kansu, whose mansion in Sianfu had been reduced to ruins, and whose heart was filled with revenge. To meet these enemies on east and west, the Shensi leaders set about enlisting all and sundry, and before long an army—of sorts!—was despatched to the east,

A Brief View of the Revolution.

and another westwards, to stem the incoming tide of invasion. But what a rabble they were!—a sprinkling of older troops, with whole regiments of lads who had never held a gun, and had first to be shown what to do with their weapons; and others composed of the scum of the population, the ne'er-do-weels, many of them outlaws from other provinces, all of them "Brethren," who had been a terror to all law-abiding citizens, and were now given a chance to prove themselves honest fighters. And to their credit be it said, these men were more than once the saving of the situation, for they proved veritable "die-hards." Armed often with nothing better than chaff-cutters, sickles, or any old knives or spears they could get hold of, they braved the fire of the enemy, and, getting to close quarters where rifles were useless, did deadly havoc with their primitive weapons, and won hard-fought victories many times. How the Imperials were held at bay so long by such a crowd will always be a mystery. But it was not to be expected that such a state of affairs could last long; step by step the enemy closed in on both sides, till in their extremity the Shensi leaders had almost decided to set fire to Sianfu and escape to the hills, leaving the helpless inhabitants to fend for themselves. Then suddenly came the news of the abdication of the Manchu Emperor, and the proclamation of the Republic on February 18, 1912. Yüan's eastern army, now that peace was made, was at once withdrawn; but the western invaders were not to be so easily moved. Their Manchu commander, Sheng Yün, was bent on

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

revenge, and would believe in no news that came through Shensi, which he looked upon as a den of thieves and robbers !

At this juncture, one of the missionaries* remaining in Sianfu (who had been able to help the new Government already in many ways, and had their full confidence and respect), with their consent, wrote letters to the Manchu Commander-in-Chief, and to five of his leading Generals, telling them that peace was proclaimed, and begging them in the name of humanity to desist from the now hopeless struggle. At the same time he wired through the British Minister in Peking to Yüan Shih K'ai (now the Provisional President of the new Republic), informing him of the acute danger threatening Sianfu from the west, and offering to forward any messages he might send for the Manchu General. The reply came in the form of a lengthy telegram of nearly 1,000 words, to be sent on to Sheng Yün, imploring him to cease fighting; and this appeal was further backed up by the return of the army which had until lately been attacking Shensi from the east—the Commander, General Chao, being ordered to bring Sheng Yün to terms, if not by peaceable means, then by force ! As a result of these drastic measures, hostilities finally ceased about the middle of March, although Sheng Yün to the end remained implacable,

* Mr. Shorrock. One of the compensations for the non-participation in the benefit of the Relief Expedition was the fact that this veteran missionary was able to communicate directly with Sir John Jordan, H.M. Minister at Peking, and that in answer to his urgent appeal the President, Yüan Shih K'ai, was able to send back the army to save the city of Sianfu from being sacked.

A Brief View of the Revolution.

and finally retired to Kansu, where he is probably still nursing his revenge.

During all these months of fighting the English doctors rendered splendid service to the wounded soldiers, who were brought in from the east and west in large numbers. Both doctors, at first, went to the front; but finding the difficulties—lack of proper premises and equipment, etc.—too great to cope with, they returned to the city, leaving their assistants at the front to attend to and send on the more urgent cases, which could only be satisfactorily treated in the Sianfu Hospital. Here the numbers grew so rapidly that by March over 600 patients were crowded into the hospital and six other buildings, commandeered by the authorities and placed at the disposal of the doctors. Between 2,000 and 3,000 wounded passed through the hospital as in-patients during the war, besides the large numbers treated outside; and all this work was done by two medical men, who had not a single qualified assistant on their staff! Those were the days of makeshifts, when stable-boys, cooks, and coolies were all pressed into the service, and developed varying gifts, one becoming a clever anæsthetist, another proving specially skilful in treating burns, and so on! During this time of stress and hard work, the doctors were ably backed up by the Chinese Red Cross Society, as well as by the War Office authorities, whose co-operation made possible the great work of mercy that was carried on throughout the early part of 1912, and still continues in a permanent refuge (known amongst the foreign community now

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

as the "Chelsea Hospital"), where 200 men, hopelessly disabled, have found a home, and are being helped to learn some means of gaining a livelihood.

The Chinese do not forget those who have stood by them in their time of need. When, at the end of June last year, the five of us who had remained in Shensi throughout the Revolution were starting for a much-needed holiday at the coast, we were hardly prepared for the public demonstration that took place. The Government insisted on supplying our mule-litters and paying all our expenses to Hankow—a journey of twelve or fourteen days. The military band played us out of the city; representatives of every department—military and civil—were assembled outside the gates to bid us farewell; troops were lined up on either side of the road at the salute, a detachment escorting us on our way; and so we left, as the honoured guests and friends of the Shensi Government. As we travelled along the hot roads day after day, the best accommodation that each place could provide was ready for us, for none of which we were allowed to pay, and—perhaps the most striking of all—not a soldier or servant could be persuaded to accept a single cash for his services! Such an experience is unique, and made us realize that the months of toil and danger had not been in vain, but will surely bear fruit in days to come.

CHAPTER VII

THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION

It was Sunday morning, October 22, 1911, after penning the paragraph on p. 58, that Dr. Robertson rode out to visit a patient in the East Suburb. He intended to be back in a couple of hours. (We borrow here from Mr. Keyte's vivid pages in his fascinating book, "The Passing of the Dragon."*) It was a perfect day—the still, crisp, cloudless day of North-West China. The old city was at its best. The food-sellers were doing a brisk trade as they sat on their tiny stools at the wayside, moving the sizzling rice in its pan, and ladling out the soup. It was all so prosperous, so comfortable, so mildly busy. Presently he reached the East Gate, where a few soldiers loitered. To the north-west of the gate stretched the Manchu city, with its wide, healthy spaces, its lovely gardens, its grand old trees. From the east came the freshness of the open country. Altogether it was good to be alive. The Sabbath beauty seemed to fall upon the scene. It was so far removed from strife. That there was fighting going on down in Hupeh they knew, but Hankow was far away, in the region of warships, railways, and field batteries. Up here in this old-world city

* Hodder and Stoughton, London.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

they were surely beyond such strife. When Peking and Hankow and Canton had fought it out, then Sianfu, hearing of some changed Government, might pay her taxes to a new receiver; the long-promised railway might come the sooner, and real reforms might be undertaken. In the meanwhile Sianfu was steeped in the drowsy sunshine. So the doctor jogged through the gate to visit his patient in the East Suburb. But half an hour later Chang Pei Ying had made his raid on the magazine, the first shot had been fired in Shensi's revolt, the only way by which Dr. Cecil could regain his hospital in the city would be by being hauled over the wall, and there was an end of peace for many a long day.

What followed is best described in Dr. Robertson's letter of October 25 to his mother:

On Saturday and Sunday morning all was quiet. The Charters' little baby had been very ill, and we were very anxious about her. I did not go to the morning service, as I wanted to see the little one again, and go out to the East Suburb to see Miss Beckingsale and the opium patients, returning to the city as soon as possible. As I rode out all was quiet and peaceful, and there was no sign of trouble, though it was very curious that a passing thought crossed my mind as I passed along, how dreadful it would be if this lovely Sunday morning were disturbed by fighting. It was only a passing fancy, and I thought no more of it. I had not been in the East Suburb more than half an hour when we heard that the soldiers had captured the arsenal, and that

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

the gates were shut; also that all the tradespeople had closed their gates. We immediately conferred together as to what to do, our first step being to try to send home the girls of the Girls' School. No one, however, would hire out carts, and there was nothing to do but to wait; also there was no method for the foreigners to get away, even if we wanted to do so. We had, however, no intention of so doing while the Girls' School was on our hands. We therefore remained quietly where we were. All that afternoon and night there was firing in the city, and we could see the flames and smoke of buildings that were being burned. We sent a man out to find out what the West Suburb was like, because the soldiers' barracks are there. He did not return that evening. I should have added that the fires inside the city came only from the Manchu part of the city, the north-east quadrant.

The next morning the man returned, saying that the West Gate was open, and that all was quiet in the West Suburb and west part of the city. We had rumours also that Mr. Henne, the postmaster, had been killed. This proved to be false, but he had received an injury, the extent of which I do not know at the time of writing, but will add later. We also had news that a foreign building had been burned in the South Suburb. There are only two foreign buildings in the South Suburb, one of which is that in which some of the Swedish Mission live. We sent at once to find out the truth of this. In the meantime we consulted together with one or two of the Chinese teachers and evangelists, especially

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

with Chow, whose photo I sent you, and who has been a great stand-by the whole time. They strongly advised us to go away to some neighbouring village until the evening, when, if all was quiet, they would give us word and we could return. I should say also that their advice was first to send away the girls in batches, some to their homes and some to neighbouring villages. You must understand that all this was not easy, for it meant suitable escort—one or more reliable married or elderly men with each batch. We foreigners were against this, but native opinion was so strong that we gave in. Mr. and Mrs. Donald Smith went with one batch, and various Chinese men went with others, in batches of five or six.

After all had gone away, the rest of us departed: Mr. Ellison and Mr. Stanley with their teacher first, and Stanley's horse carrying a few things; afterwards Miss Turner, Miss Thomas, Miss Beckingsale, and myself. Miss Beckingsale was on my horse. She was still convalescent from her recent illness. We took with us all the silver we had, amounting to between £40 and £50. Just as we were starting the messengers sent to the South Suburb returned, saying that five of the foreigners had been killed. This seemed to confirm our plans as being the right ones to adopt. I cannot tell you the exact feeling I had as we started out. I felt calm and collected in a measure, but I find it difficult to describe the feelings that filled my heart. However, before long there was only the sense of peace in the knowledge that I was a child of God and a servant of Jesus

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

Christ. We had gone about three or four li, and were approaching the village, when we saw a large number of the villagers coming out to meet us, and not looking very friendly. We skirted the north of the village, and before long caught sight of Mr. Ellison and Mr. Stanley about 150 yards away. Then we saw some of the villagers seize Mr. Stanley's horse and fight for the contents of the bag on his horse. Then the man who had seized his horse galloped across to us, in a rough way ordering Miss Beckingsale to get off my horse, which she did as quickly as she could. They then took my horse and clamoured and fought together for the things we were carrying. Finally, they ordered me to return to the East Suburb, and there was no help for it. We tried to talk peaceably with them, but they would not let us go on. We therefore went along slowly back, being followed by the crowd of at least 60 to 100. We had previously heard a rumour that the East Gates were to be opened at midday, and that the Revolutionaries were coming out to sack our place and presumably kill the foreigners. It seemed, therefore, in view of what had happened to the people in the South Suburb, that we were returning to certain death. I had never faced death before, and even then I could not realize it, and thought about you and darling Grace as I walked back, and could hardly realize that very likely I should never see you all again. However, we all walked quietly back, the crowd hanging back after a little while. I should have said that they first of all searched our persons,

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

and took all the silver and most of the belongings we were carrying. The only thing of any moment that any of us suffered was that after the crowd had dropped behind some way, one of the men came galloping up behind us, right into our midst, and knocked Miss Beckingsale over. Fortunately, however, she was not seriously hurt, and was able to come on with us. The two men, who seemed to be the leaders, rode right on into the suburb, and we followed, going straight back to our house.

We waited there for about one and three-quarter hours, expecting all the while that the soldiers would be coming. About an hour after, we heard that the soldiers had entered the suburb. We therefore had prayer and reading together, and were all wonderfully calm. I was especially struck with the attitude of the ladies. While we were reading news came that the report was false. We soon learned, however, that the two men who had ridden our horses into the suburb had gone on to the foot of the wall, telling those on the top of the wall what they had done. The officer on the wall, however, told them that they must on no account do any damage to the foreigners, and must return our things. We have since learned that these men belonged to a society, the purpose of which is to enrich themselves, and it was only by large offers from the officers on the wall that they withheld their hand from the East Suburb.

* * * * *

Another account of that experience is as follows:

“Of the rest of that walk home I can say but

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

little. It was an inexpressibly solemn time. We hardly spoke, and we felt that we should soon be done with this world. By the time our gate was reached only a few of the most violent of the crowd were following. We all went to the house occupied by Ellison and Stanley, and then ensued the most trying time of all, sitting for an hour and a half awaiting the return of the crowd which would seal our doom. We took some milk and biscuits, as we had eaten nothing since 8.0 a.m. and it was now past one o'clock. Kneeling down, we committed ourselves to God's hands. Rising from our knees, two of our number made our wills, and gave them into the hands of our small serving-boy, who stood by, his tears rolling down his cheeks. Dr. Robertson wrote a brief account of what had happened to the London Secretary of the Mission. These last duties finished, we sat down to await the end. Dr. Robertson read some comforting passages of Scripture, notably John xiv. Finally he ceased, and we sat in silence. God at this time put a wonderful peace into our hearts. No fear, only sorrow that our service was so soon ended. No dread, for should we not soon see Him face to face! We thought of home, and loved ones, and the possible manner of our death, and of the home to which we were speedily going. At the end of an hour and a half our servant came rushing back, saying that the soldiers were shouting from the walls that we must be protected; and the tears that never came at the thought of death brimmed in our eyes at the thought of release and liberty.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

“ This evening one of the hospital assistants turned up. He was let down over the city wall by four soldiers to fetch Dr. Robertson. He felt it his duty to be there, and hurried off to be drawn up before dark. We have all been very happy in mutual support and companionship, and Dr. Robertson has been a tower of strength to us all. It was rather hard to spare him, as he has been our leader and chief stand-by.”

* * * * *

We will now resume Dr. Robertson's own account:

Later on that afternoon, towards dark, we heard that the Rev. and Mrs. Donald Smith had been found, and were being brought in. They had fared worse than we had, having been surrounded by a mob and badly beaten. Mr. Smith had both his arms broken, besides wounds of head and leg, in addition to many bruises. Mrs. Smith, too, suffered not a little on her own account, but I expect more through seeing Mr. Smith beaten in that way. They were attacked once, and then allowed to sit down for a while. Later on they were attacked again, and again left. Then some of our boys found them, and were able to bring them back to us. It has been interesting to notice which of our boys have remained staunch, and which have left us; among the former is that boy whom I caught trying to steal some of my things last year. When the Smiths came along, I was able to help them, and one began to see God's purpose in getting me

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

out to the East Suburb just before the gate was closed, so that I was prevented from returning.

That evening we all remained at the Bachelor House, but the next afternoon the ladies and Smiths moved up to the B.Z.M. House, which is only separated by the churchyard from the Bachelors'. I also went up there to look after Mr. Smith, who could do nothing for himself. During that day some of the gentry in the T'ung Kuan paid us a visit, saying that they were doing all in their power to protect us. They sent twenty armed men to specially patrol our street, and distributed others throughout the East Suburb, the special fear being of robbers and bad characters from outside. However, though we had many alarming reports, none of them came true.

The next day everything continued as before, except that we heard that the Manchus were overcome, and the city was in the hands of the reformers. The gate was still not open, but the firing was less. Just as we were having tea, a messenger came to say that our head assistant had come along to fetch me into the city, as there were so many wounded, and Dr. Charter was alone at the hospital. So, after a little consultation with the others, I decided to go in; but as the gates were closed, I had to be hauled up the wall by a rope. It was a weird experience, for it is a pretty high wall. Needless to say, the inhabitants of the East Suburb were all very interested. From the inside of the gate to the hospital I was accompanied by four soldiers. On the way I was taken to the ammunition stores to see the head man, but he was not there. We after-

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

wards met him and two of our business managers—one from the hospital and the other of the East Suburb—and I was able to tell them about affairs in the East Suburb, and next day soldiers were sent out to protect them. I need not dwell on the unpleasant sights, but it is needless to say that the city presented a very different aspect from that when I left it. Shops all closed, soldiers on foot and horse getting about on their various errands. I was glad to get back to the hospital. I found that the Charters' little baby had died the night before. The story they had to tell I must try to give you later, but will now continue with events as they have affected me during the last week.

November 1.—We have been very busy with the wounded soldiers and others. Many of the wounds we have attended to are the result of not knowing how to use a rifle. We have had a lot of soldiers as patients, for we were well known amongst them. The thing that has been most dreadful is to see the little children who have suffered. One little chap of twelve with whom I was much taken had terrible injuries. He has died. Oh, war is horrible! Now we are receiving people who were wounded at the beginning, but who could not, or would not, come at first. Their wounds are in a horribly filthy condition. I have seen more terrible things this last ten days than I have seen in all my previous experience, and the trying part has been our absolute inability to cope adequately with the amount of work, especially in the way of nursing, for which we have practically no provision.

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

On Thursday evening, after I had got to bed for about half an hour, I was called up to go to the Provincial College, which is only about two minutes off. Here I found I had been summoned to see the former Provincial Treasurer, the second official of the province. He is not a Manchu, but he had tried to take his life with a rifle. He had been found that evening, and brought to this college, which just now is the seat of Government. I sent for one of our boys to bring instruments and chloroform; was able to extract the bullet, and I think he will get better. While there I met the man who is now acting as Governor, so I had the opportunity of speaking somewhat of our affairs. I have met him once or twice since. On each occasion he has been most anxious to show his concern about the safety and well-being of the foreigners. I am going each day to see my patient at the college.

We have been anxious concerning the safety of the Shorrocks at Fu Yin Ts'un, and of the Youngs, who are on their way back from Suite-chow, having left Yenanku on October 23. We sent word to the Governor about them, and he said that he had despatched 100 soldiers to San Yuan to protect and escort them down; but I am afraid that all he has told us in this way has not been carried out. The country is by no means a safe place just now, there being no Government. Robbers take their opportunity, and make the most of it. The Shorrocks are being guarded by 100 men of the village night and day, and from what we hear from them by letters it is quite necessary.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

I must go on with my story another day. I want to have a little reading and meditation this evening before retiring. There has been so little time for it these few days, and I do not want to lose the lessons that God has to teach me in all this. I think there is not one of us but has felt Him to be wonderfully near, and having proved once what He could be to us when we were face to face with death—in thought, if not in actuality—it gives confidence in Him for the future. Oh that we may trust Him fully, and be more useful as the result of this!

November 2, Sianfu.—I will now try to tell you as far as I can what took place inside the city. It so happened that on the first day of this Chinese month there was an eclipse of the sun here. Whether they purposely arranged to break out on that day on that account I cannot say, but the eclipse took place about 10.30, and the trouble broke out about twelve o'clock. The soldiers first took the arsenal, and gave out arms and ammunition to everyone who was willing to join them, their badge being white. It was unfortunate that they had not adopted a more distinctive badge, for many bad characters put on a white badge, obtained arms, and used them only to rob and loot. I cannot tell you just now when the attack on the Manchu part of the city first began, but it must have commenced soon after, and continued more or less incessantly until Wednesday morning, when the work was practically finished. The object of the Revolutionaries was to exterminate the Manchus—man, woman, and child. After Wednesday they ceased killing the women and girls, but



DR. CECIL ROBERTSON AND A GROUP OF PATIENTS.

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

continued to seek out the males. The position of the Manchus was absolutely hopeless from the start. Though they live in a separate quarter of the city, they are not enclosed by a wall; and though every Manchu man is a soldier, they are soldiers of the old type, and armed with very inferior weapons, their rifles being able to fire only once to the new troops' five times; therefore, though there were 5,000 Manchus, they could do little. The Chinese fired their houses, and then killed all they could while they were escaping. Many of the Manchus climbed up the city wall and dropped down the other side, some to become badly maimed, others to be killed, and perhaps a few to escape. Many took their lives either by jumping down wells or by hanging themselves. This was especially the case with the women. It is rumoured that there are still very many Manchus in hiding, and that is not unlikely. The soldiers were allowed to take anything they chose from the Manchu city, and when I passed through the city three days ago there were plenty of beautiful silk garments lined with fine furs on the backs of the soldiers, who in consequence presented quite a picturesque appearance. A large number of people have received injuries owing to the Manchus hiding their gunpowder underground, so that there were sudden explosions in the burning houses, with no previous warning, and many persons who were seeking spoil have been severely burned. We have had several brought to the hospital suffering from burns in this way. One man came in almost naked, having had practically all his clothes burned off him.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

On the second or third day a proclamation was issued, the main purport of which was to "raise the Chinese and destroy the Manchus," also "protect the merchants, the foreigners, and churches of the people." Since then a temporary system of policing the streets has been established, and every household is expected to provide a night-watchman at night. The new authorities are also doing their utmost to seek out those who looted the shops on the first two days. They have already discovered a large number, all of whom are being very summarily dealt with. However, despite all this, it is still the reign of the soldiers, and while soldiers are looking after things, it is scarcely likely that there will be real peace and safety for the average commoner in carrying on his daily avocation. The majority of them have been going about lately with drawn swords, and not a few innocent persons have suffered at their hands.

There must have been a frightful slaughter of the Manchus. I expect that foreign countries will be horrified when they hear the tidings. It is Eastern, but it is horrible. The doctrine of "no quarter" is so absolutely foreign to the Western mind, and many scores of able and good men must have been killed. There are many thinking men who, though they dare not say it in public, yet feel that the affair has been altogether too severe, and that if people were willing to submit, their lives should have been spared. One man told me that there had been nothing like this in all the past history of China. I heard the following of one of the leading pro-

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

fessors: He was a Manchu, had always treated his pupils well, and was well liked by them—indeed, was on intimate terms with many. He had been in Japan at the same college with the man who is the head of the movement here. He therefore went to this man, who protected him for two days; but then the authorities moved his headquarters, and another man took his place. This latter man had also been formerly on friendly terms with the Manchu official. He treated him, however, as if he did not recognize him, asked him who he was, and, directly he opened his mouth, showing by his speech that he was a Manchu, ordered his men to kill him. This is the sort of thing that makes one sick at heart. China has none too many good men to kill them so ruthlessly, and if they were willing to submit to the new Government, why kill them?

One cannot help wondering what will ultimately happen. Will the new men be able to manage affairs? They are all, or nearly all, very young men—*e.g.*, the head of the Foreign Office here is only twenty-one, and the Governor cannot be more than thirty-five. The only hope seems to me to be in the inherently law-abiding and peaceable character of the Chinese, who, directly a Government is established which is at all reliable, will obey and support it. Of course, I do not know what men they have in other provinces. The thing that seems pretty evident now is that they have too much to do, and too few men to carry out their plans. All prices are greatly increased. Most foodstuffs are double the price, and clothing material is also at

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

least double the price. This is due largely to the large amount of looting that was done on the first two days by bad characters. They tell me that all the shops—silver-shops, pawn-shops, silk merchants, boot and shoe shops, cloth-shops, cash-shops, foreign food-shops; in fact, all the shops that had things that could be taken—were looted. Possibly a few escaped, but according to report not many. I must stop again for to-night. It is a long story, and there is much more to tell. I wish I had better powers of description, for I suppose I have seen more than most foreigners here. God has guided us in a wonderful way. I cannot tell you what He has meant in the last few days. How I have longed for years for a more intimate knowledge of Him! I think that He Himself has been teaching me of late. May I be ready to learn all that He has for me, and for greater opportunities of service later!

November 4, Sianfu.—I have already told you that the present military régime is one full of terror to the average citizen. There are numerous rumours, more or less alarming, every day. To-day it is said that a large Mohammedan army is waiting at Ping Liang Fu ready to march on Sianfu; also that a Manchu army from Peking is coming west, the Manchu being said to be victorious at Peking. But no reliance can be placed on these reports.

But now to come back again to affairs as they affected the hospital and Dr. and Mrs. Charter. Some little time after I had left the hospital to go to the East Suburb, Mr. Henne came to see how the Charters' little baby was. He came on his

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

horse. On his return the affair had broken out in the city, and he was attacked by robbers and bad characters, who first demanded his horse, then allowed him to walk on a bit, but again set on him, inflicting a number of wounds on his head. Had he not been rescued by soldiers he would certainly have been killed. On his arrival at his house Dr. Charter was immediately sent for, being escorted there by soldiers; but after he had finished binding up Mr. Henne's wounds it was considered too dangerous for him to return through the streets, and he had to wait until the next day. In the meantime Mrs. Charter and Miss Watt were alone at the hospital, with the little baby gradually sinking. Can you imagine what a terrible time they must have had during those hours, with the city in an uproar, and most of the hospital servants in a state of terror?

However, all was well until about Monday mid-day, when a large crowd of Mohammedans collected outside the hospital with intent to kill, and to do damage to the building. The ladies felt that their last hours had come. Fortunately, however, our business manager was on the premises, and he did his utmost to comfort and help them. In their desperation they cried to God to send them someone reliable who could advise them how to act. In the midst of their praying Mr. Lin, whom I have already mentioned, came in to tell them not to be afraid, because the mob outside would very soon disperse, which proved true; so they, too, in a wonderful way proved God's nearness in a time of extremity. Not long after this Dr. Charter re-

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

turned, and the work of attending to the wounded began, and they were kept pretty busy. Their baby died on Tuesday night at twelve o'clock, and, as I have said before, I was sent for on Wednesday afternoon.

I think, perhaps, I will leave the story of the people in the South Suburb for another time. Let me tell you of one of the Swedish ladies who lives at a place about eighteen miles away. Robbers came to loot her house and to kill her, but she managed to escape to another house not far off. Here she remained two days without food, and her pursuers actually came to the very room where she was hiding, coming twice; but though she was only just behind the door, they did not see her. This sounds impossible, but it is so. One ought never to lose faith in our God after experiences such as these; and, whatever He has in store for us in the future, we shall have been prepared in these days, whether it be for more service here or for an early call to be with Him.

The soldiers who went to fetch the Shorrocks from Fu Yin Ts'un earlier in the week returned with them yesterday, and we are all very glad that they are with us again. They have had days of much difficulty at Fu Yin Ts'un, and it has been necessary for them to have a large number of men keeping guard night and day to prevent robbers attacking them. One night some men were caught attempting to set fire to their house, and at another time an alarm was given for them to escape to a hiding-place on which they had arranged; so we are glad

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

for their sakes as well as ours to have them back again. We are now anxious about the people in the north of the province, especially for the Youngs, who were on their way down from Yenanku, as we know that there are many people in the north who have strong feeling against foreigners; but we must hope for the best, and wait for news. Soldiers are being sent up to escort them back again here.

November 7, Sianfu.—Since writing the above we have had news of the Youngs, for which we are profoundly thankful. It appears that they left Yenanku on Monday, October 23, the day after the trouble broke out here. They first heard of the Revolution at the end of the second day's journey, but they still came on, and had reached Chung Pu, four days from Yenanku, when they heard more about the trouble here, and received a report that the foreigners were killed. They went to see the official in Chung Pu, who gave them an escort of soldiers. At the end of that day's journey a letter from Mr. Shorrocks reached them by a messenger from Fu Yin Ts'un to say that Mr. and Mrs. Donald Smith were dead, and that we had all left the East Suburb. To explain Mr. Shorrocks writing this, I must say that this was the first news he received which seemed to be attested by circumstantial evidence, for the head-teacher in the school said he had seen them both dead on the roadside! Dr. Young therefore decided to attempt to return to Yenanku. They got back to Chung Pu, but here they were deprived of all they had—their horse and all their belongings. They then went to the house of a Church member,

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

and later resumed their journey, keeping off the main roads, until ultimately they found a cave where they could hide. Here they were able to get food from friendly people, but they dared not go on, for their boys, who were sent out to make inquiry, said it was not safe. Finally, they sent their boys to the city here to find out how matters stood, and they arrived on Saturday night last, November 4. On the following day a little company of horse soldiers, with some of our men, started to fetch them down here, so we hope that before many days they will be back amongst us. The details of their experiences I must wait for. Dr. Young said that though the food was coarse, they were getting on all right, and were quite safe. He had written his letter with a piece of incense-stick, not having any pencil to write with.

Some days ago Mr. Beckman came in to see us. He was the missionary living in the South Suburb. It appears that the evening of the Sunday on which the trouble broke out they had discussed the best method of escaping if they were attacked. I ought to tell you that living at their house were Mr. and Mrs. Beckman, their three children, three other children, and Mr. Watney, a young man who has only recently come out, and teaches some of the children of the Swedish Mission in this district. The house is situated outside the walls of the South Suburb. It has a large garden in front and at the back, and is surrounded by a fairly high wall. In the front there is an entrance by a large wooden gate. About midnight they were attacked by a

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

band who, as we afterwards heard, consisted largely of robbers and bad characters of the neighbourhood. All the servants fled, and not only so, but removed the ladder that they had put up against the wall to enable them to get over if they were attacked; so when they came to this place, they could not find the ladder. They put a barrow up against the wall, and Mr. Watney climbed up on the wall, their plan being to hand the children over; but only one child was handed over, and when it began to cry Mr. Watney jumped down on the other side. Mr. Beckman called out to them, but had no reply, and gathered that Mr. Watney and this child, who was his own daughter, a girl of twelve, had been compelled to run. I ought to say there was no moon to enable them to see. Mr. Beckman, his wife, a little baby, and a little girl of seven or eight, and the rest of the children, then got into a little outhouse near by and remained there. Presently they heard footsteps, and there was knocking at the door. His wife jumped out at once with the little girl of seven or eight, but Mr. Beckman remained back for a while. He could see that there was only one man in the courtyard, for they had set fire to his house, and all was lighted up. I do not think he saw his wife again after that. They must have caught her and killed her at once. He, with the little baby in his arms, then went out. The man had disappeared. He knew he could not get out at the back, so he went round to the front. The front gate was burned down, and outside was a mob of people. He ran right through them, and made straight for a pool

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

just outside the suburb, and jumped down the side into the water, which was about two feet deep. Here he stopped for a while in a little recess among some thick grass, praying God to help him. He could hear the men searching for him, and when he saw that they had lamps he moved a little farther along to a tree, by the side of which he remained, still hidden by the thick grass. He heard them asking for him, and presently three men were deputed to watch until morning. He then heard these men come to the conclusion that since it was impossible for him to get up on the north side, because it was too steep, they would remain watching the three other sides. All this time he was standing in the water with his little baby in his arms, and not once did she utter a sound that might betray his presence. After a while he saw the morning star, and heard the men remark on it, saying that soon it would be light, and they would be able to find him. He therefore felt about on the north side of the pool, and found a place where he could just reach to the top with his arm. He therefore put the little baby there. She made a little sound, and he took her down again, and sought for another place, but not finding one, he returned and put her up there again, praying that she might be kept quiet. He then managed to climb up, though his strength was almost gone, and escaped from his watchers, reaching the West Suburb, where he was received by his friends. He and his little baby are the only two who escaped from that place. It is terribly sad. Six children, Mrs. Beckman, and Mr.

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

Watney lost their lives. Mr. Watney and the girl (Beckman) ran for about six miles, but were overtaken and done to death by having mud bricks thrown at them. One boy who was killed was such a jolly little chap. His mother, Mrs. Ahlstrand, is such a noble woman, and he was the very idol of their home. She had brought him to me to see about his eyes, and I had already ordered glasses for him from Shanghai. I hear that she and her husband have just arrived in the city from their station two days' away, so they are safe.

The new authorities are extremely sorry about this affair. They ought to have managed better if they really wanted to avoid the bloodshed of foreigners, for they must know that in many places the people are not really friendly. It was unfortunate that this place was so far outside the suburb. Four men have been executed there on account of their share in this, and their heads hung up outside the gate, with characters saying that this is the punishment meted out to those who kill the foreigners.

There has recently been started here a Red Cross League, and on Sunday I had a visit from the two head men, who told me that they are not able to attend to the wounded, as their methods are no good! They asked if we would receive anybody they had on their hands who had been wounded? Of course I said we should be very pleased to do so. They told us that they are busy with the burial of the dead; and are burying them in the Manchu city in pits, about ten in one pit. They told me that up to the

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

present they have buried 4,000; but, at a low estimate, probably 10,000 have been killed, for there were 5,000 Manchu soldiers, not counting their families, which must bring the total number up to at least 10,000. These men told me that more have died from suicide, either by poison, strangulation, or jumping into wells, than by wounds. Also, that the Chinese have received comparatively very few injuries, which is not surprising in view of their superior weapons. It is a remarkable thing that we know certainly of the safety of nearly all our Manchu Christians. There are many Manchus in hiding; we have some here at the hospital who came in amongst the wounded, but our boys have since told us that they are Manchus. We shall keep them here until there is a real chance of their safety.

We have been receiving a great many rumours of all sorts, one of which was that a large Mohammedan army from Kansuh was about to march on us here. It was waiting at a place eight days distant. Today we hear that forty Mohammedans from the west came to ascertain the actual conditions. They were taken to see the Governor, and were sent away with 50 taels each in their pockets (£6) to induce them to say good words to the folk who sent them!

We have also heard that the band of soldiers who were sent to Weinan, forty miles east of here, to demand its surrender, were joined by robbers who appeared to be friends. The robbers, however, set on them, killed several, and then went to Weinan, and demanded 7,000 taels of silver, which I am told they received. This shows how the present trouble

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

has brought all the bad elements to the surface; the country is simply infested with robbers, and if the Government is going to secure real order they have a very difficult task before them.

The city continues quiet, except for little bands of horse soldiers galloping about on business, and the way these soldiers gallop down the streets is most dangerous. One man was brought in here the other day who had been knocked over, and he died from his injuries. There is not much business being done except in foodstuffs. Wounded are still coming in, some who were wounded over two weeks ago with compound fractures, bullet wounds of hands, hands and fingers cut off—all in a most horrible state of filth. The suffering that they have been undergoing must have been terrible, but many of them have been too weak or too frightened to come before.

I must finish for this evening, for, as I am writing, I can hear the night-watchman going his round, beating his little rattle or drum. It is a most peaceful sound. I like to lie in bed and hear him gradually come nearer, and then gradually die away in the distance.

November 13, Sianfu.—Two days ago the funeral of the foreigners who had been killed at the South Suburb took place in the garden of the house, which is now a complete ruin, the walls alone standing. It is amazing to see how thoroughly the ruffians did their work that night: every single place was burned, not even little outhouses remaining. There must have been bitter hatred of the foreigner by those

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

who did the deed; most of them have now fled, and the inhabitants of the South Suburb are all afraid. The funeral was very trying for some of the relatives, especially for the mothers whose children had been killed. Mrs. Ahlstrand, of whom I have already spoken, was there. One could see how intense was her grief; it was a sad and yet a beautiful picture to see her kneeling by the coffin of her little boy!* Poor woman, it is a bitter cup! As we stood together amongst the ruins we could not but realize the horror of that night, and the ruthlessness of the men who did the deed. A number of the Chinese came, amongst them the head of the Foreign Office, the head of the Military School, and a representative of the General, who had left the city to attend to affairs in T'ung Kuan, a town on the border of the province.

You will remember that I mentioned that town just after my arrival here. It is one of great strategic importance. There has been some trouble there, the exact nature of which it is difficult to make out. The General visited it, three days ago, to try and settle affairs, but we have not yet received certain news. The Red Cross League sent three of their men to us, wanting to borrow instruments and obtain drugs. They told me they had been ordered to go to T'ung Kuan, where there had been fighting, and to attend to the wounded; but they felt their helplessness, not knowing at all how to treat wounds. I pointed out to them the danger of putting instruments in the hands of men who did not know how

* "George, a Little Martyr for Jesus" (Morgan and Scott).

The Outbreak of the Revolution.

to use them. It was as bad as to give a rifle to a man who did not know how to use it, so they had to be satisfied with a few brief instructions as to how to bind up a simple wound. It would be ludicrous if it were not so pitiful. They will doubtless have the more severe cases of those who do not die sent to us here; but think of the delay—three days' distance—and all the pain and discomfort of the journey! The city is fairly quiet now, but life is still pretty cheap; men are losing their lives for very small crimes, and any Manchu males who are found are still being killed.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMONED TO T'UNG KUAN

November 23, T'ung Kuan.—On Wednesday evening, a week ago, the Youngs got back to the East Suburb from the north. I have not yet had a detailed account of their experiences, but they appeared better in health than I had expected, and the little boy was in good form. On Friday Mr. Shorrock and Dr. Young came into the hospital, and while they were there the head of the Foreign Office, Mr. Lin, came to say that they wanted to send one of us to see to the people here who had been wounded, because the Red Cross League people were not able to meet the urgent needs of the situation. So it was arranged that I should come. I started right away to get things ready, and left the city the next day at noon. It was fortunate that Dr. Young and Mr. Shorrock were there, as we were able to consult together, and I was able to hand over my part of affairs at the hospital to Dr. Young.

That briefly explains the above address. It appears that after affairs broke out in Sianfu, the Shensi troops got possession of this place, which is really in Shensi Province. The troops consisted of about 1,000 men. The Manchu official here, however, escaped, and, according to reports, went into Honan,

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

asking that troops might be sent to reconquer the city. In consequence some soldiers were sent, and though the gates were locked, they climbed over the wall. When these Honan soldiers entered T'ung Kuan, the Shensi troops were practically helpless, as they were poorly equipped with ammunition and rifles, whereas the Honan soldiers had good weapons. The Honan troops must have been here several days—six or seven—during which they ransacked every house and shop in the place, demanding silver and valuables, killing if not at once shown where the things were. When more Shensi troops arrived from the west, the Honan men packed up their things on mules and left. One can imagine something of the joy of the inhabitants when the Shensi troops arrived, for they were fearing that they would die of starvation, not having any animals left to grind the corn. However, food and fodder have been sent from the neighbouring places for the inhabitants and the newly arrived soldiers, and the food-shops are doing a considerable trade.

After the Shensi troops occupied the place a second time, they asked for the Red Cross League people to come. These, however, realized their own incompetence to deal with the wounded, and after the General returned to Sianfu, I was asked to go. As you may guess, we had to work hard to get things ready, and had it not been for Miss Watt I do not think it could have been done. However, by mid-day Saturday, the 18th, all was ready; but, with true Chinese delay, we did not really get on our way until the next morning, though we got as far as

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

the East Suburb, where I spent the night with the Shorrocks. The next day the carts, four of them, with the medicine, dressings, instruments, two hospital assistants, my cook, and four Red Cross League men to minister to my wants and generally to carry out my instructions, went on ahead, leaving, as I supposed and had been informed, a horse soldier to accompany me, as I was going on my horse. But after waiting an hour for this man to turn up, I found that he had gone. This seemed rather trying. Here was I left behind, the most essential member of the expedition! However, Mr. Shorrock lent me a horse, and my horse-boy escorted me until we caught them up six and a half miles out. Subsequently we were overtaken by another man who is managing everything for me—a very decent fellow, a Honan man, awfully keen on everything foreign, who has been drill-master to the two largest schools in the city. He and I reached Lin T'ung, sixteen and a half miles from Sianfu, a little after midday. It was our intention to get on farther the same day, but our own carts turned up too late, as the roads were very bad indeed, owing to rains during the previous week. We spent the night at the Yamen. The next day my companion and I got on to Weinan.

While at Weinan I heard that the Evangelist at a neighbouring place where the C.I.M. works, after the outbreak of trouble, went to take refuge at the house of a Christian. The magistrate at this place had already committed suicide. When these men heard that robbers had come into the place they

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

both took poison; the Evangelist died, but the other man did not. This is a thoroughly Chinese way of doing things. In the case of officials it is a mark of devotion to commit suicide if the dynasty under which they were serving is abolished.

The next day we had arranged to go by boat, but I found that it would take longer than I expected. We therefore sent on the goods and some of the men by boat, while Tung, one of the hospital assistants, and I rode by horse. We hoped to reach T'ung Kuan the same day, but it was impossible, owing to the rain, for it poured all day long, and we had to put up at a little village, the inn being none of the best. We all three slept together on the k'ang. We had the k'ang heated, but then we could not get to lie down for some time because the smoke in the room was altogether too overpowering. However, we slept all right, and next day got on early. Fortunately, it was fine, and we reached T'ung Kuan (twenty-four miles) before midday. I was thus able to get the premises we were to occupy fixed up before the boat arrived the next morning, and things were ready for use that afternoon (Thursday).

On our arrival we went to the Yamen, saw the head man, and had food there. That evening we slept at our hospital, which was located in premises at the back of the post-office. Trestle beds have been put up covered with straw and felt. A little operating-room is all ready, kitchen, store, cooks, and helpers; the only drawback is that the patients are not flocking in as I expected. However, we have

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

ten to start with, and I expect they will come along all right.

It is difficult to realize that we are now in the midst of perhaps the most momentous Revolution that has happened within the last hundred years, the issues of which will be fraught with good or bad for the whole world. If one stops to consider, one can hardly conceive what may be the outcome; and now, as one thinks of the headquarters at Sianfu and here, of the young men who are at the head, of their keenness, of their audacity at undertaking such an affair, of what they have already done, one cannot help wondering what the outcome will be and what the future will bring.

I overheard a rather interesting conversation at one inn at which we stopped for midday meal. To explain, I must say that I was wearing foreign clothes on the journey, the big overcoat I bought just before leaving, and the leather boots and leggings. Translated freely, it would be like this in English:

A. "What do you think of that woollen overcoat?"

B. "It does not look very thick, and it is not very good-looking, but it must have been very expensive."

A. "No, it is not thick, but I should think it is warm." To me: "Is it warm?"

C. F. R. "Oh yes, it is all right."

B. "Oh, he understands Chinese!"

C. "Yes, he is from the 'Save the World' Hall in the city. There is Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Young

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

and Dr. Charter there at the hospital. I know them. They have been there eight years, and they can speak and understand the language; but their language is very difficult to understand" (referring to English).

A. "Those leather boots he is wearing look rather cold, but I should think they last a long time."

C. "Yes, they last several years; but they cost about 8 taels (£1). These foreigners have a lot of money."

There was a little more of it, which I forget. I appeared not to understand, and found it very interesting.

Last night I was called out about midnight to go to our friends, the Chinese doctors of the Red Cross League, who have a patient with a wound of his head. This wound has been bleeding periodically, and last night they could not stop it, and so sent for me. It was really somewhat amusing going along there at dead of night with the Red Cross men, about six of them, accompanying me with drawn swords ready to protect me. They were profuse in their promises to protect me, against what I do not know, for all the inhabitants of this place are so scared they would not touch a dog. However, when we reached our destination, I found the man with his head plastered up with mud and filth to stop the bleeding, which they had effected. I removed the mass of plaster and mud with some difficulty and cleaned up his head, and succeeded without much trouble in stopping the bleeding permanently. The wound is not a serious one, and

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

will easily heal up; but because of this wounded vessel it was very serious to them.

I had several more patients yesterday, amongst them a young fellow who had received bad burns over one-third of his back, one arm, neck, and face. They had been done about three weeks previously, and the poor fellow was in a most pitiable condition. The only treatment that had been adopted was to sprinkle dry earth over the burns, which, with the discharge from the raw surfaces, had been converted into mud, partly dried and caked on, and partly moist. It was a sore job to get him clean. His bedding was all covered with earth and mud. However, we got him moderately clean. There is another man with burns who is being brought here to-day.

We also had a man in yesterday who had been beaten for deserting. My word! the Chinese beating is a horrible sort of affair. This is the second case I have seen. I saw one some months ago at the beggars' home. In each case it was the same. Large ulcers of both legs as the result. It will be weeks before he is about again.

To-day we hear there has been fighting with the Honan troops about sixty miles to the east, and so we are sending men to bring back the wounded here. Of course, the Red Cross brethren ought to have sent men with the troops for that purpose. It will be a bit better than before, however, for most of the patients here had been wounded two or three weeks before I saw them. These will only have been wounded four or five days.

November 30, T'ung Kuan.—Two more days have

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

slipped away, and we have had four men in from the east side, where there has been fighting, but only one with a really serious injury. We have had various reports as to what has taken place, but the last is more reassuring—viz., that the two Generals have agreed, and that no more fighting is to take place. Each is to remain in his own province; but by to-morrow, perhaps, we shall be able to get at the facts, for I hear that the Shensi General has returned to a place twenty li away.

December 13, Hua Chou.—On the 2nd the General returned to the city, with all the soldiers who had gone east against the Honan troops, a peace having been concluded, by which each army is to keep within its own territory. On that same afternoon I received a letter from Mr. Shorrock which made me feel it was right to go back to Sianfu—for a day or two, at any rate—and in view of this peace it seemed possible to go. I therefore started off about eleven o'clock on the next day with my former companion Tung, who wanted to return to the city, leaving my two assistants to look after my patients in the meantime. We reached Sianfu about 11 a.m., Tuesday, December 5. I found all quiet there, though they had had some bad scares of Mohammedans coming from the west, the Chinese greatly fearing another Mohammedan invasion. I remained in Sianfu Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and started back on Friday morning, being accompanied by another man called Sun, Tung not being able to return for two or three days. On arrival we found that there had been fighting the previous day, and

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

that the Shensi troops had been forced to retire to within thirteen miles of T'ung Kuan on the east side. I went to see the General, but found he was out, and afterwards discovered that he had gone out of the *West Gate*. He had practically run away, with his guards. This very soon got known in the city, and the result was that everybody, soldiers and inhabitants alike, wanted to leave the city. The *West Gate* was, however, kept shut until dark.

By this time the Honan troops had advanced farther, and firing was very close, within a mile of the walls. At dark it ceased, and the Shensi troops retired within the city walls. About dark the officers at the Yamen wanted me to move there, I afterwards learnt, with the idea of my leaving the city at dark with them. I felt it to be my duty to remain with the patients. It was easy to see how anxious and disturbed all my boys were, so I had evening worship with them. I told them that we could rest assured that we would be all right, that the Honan troops would not want to kill us, who were helping men, and were ready to help the Honan wounded men likewise. I also spoke about God's protection. However, they still remained extremely anxious to go, and not one of them would have remained with me. It was extremely difficult to know what to do. Some of the patients had left, and of those who could not walk (five), one or two were taken away by their friends. The boys and Sun, my companion, all declared that Chinese were not like foreigners, and that the Honanese would regard all as their enemies, saving none, and having

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

no respect for the Red Cross flag. I was torn with conflicting feelings and duties. In the meantime Sun secured a cart to wait outside our place to be in readiness if we wanted to go, and I then consented to go if firing broke out again during the night.

About 11 p.m., when the moon began to get up, firing began again just outside the wall. We sent to the Yamen to see what they were doing, and found that not a soul was there. They had all fled some time previously. We then packed up what we could and started, and as we went through the streets we could see that the city was practically empty. How many soldiers remained on the wall I do not know, but all the next day there were streams of people, both peasants and soldiers, for about forty miles from T'ung Kuan. When we reached Hua Yin Hsien, a place twelve miles from T'ung Kuan, we tried to find out where the General was. We discovered the place where his guard were, but he with a few others had left some two hours previously. So we, too, came on, travelling all night and all the next day, finally reaching here in the afternoon. The inhabitants of nearly every place had shut up shop and fled, as they heard that the Manchu troops were coming. As a result, food was very difficult to get. Arrived here, we found the General, and went to see him. I asked him to send a letter to the Honan General, asking if he would let me go to T'ung Kuan to see after the patients and wounded there, which he consented to do. The next day he sent, asking me if I would remain here, as

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

there were a number of wounded who had been brought here. Unfortunately, we had not brought away dressings. I therefore sent one of my boys back to the city to get them, but it will be three days before he can get back.

Yesterday evening the General from Sianfu arrived here, and to-day about 3,000 soldiers have arrived. They are going to march on to T'ung Kuan to-morrow, and in the event of their retaking that city we shall move on there again. If the troops are beaten, we shall have to return to Sianfu. This is a bad time for the common people; indeed, the reign of the soldier is a reign of terror for ordinary folk. We are staying at the shop of a grain merchant who had fled, but when he came here the next day he was obviously delighted to find that we were stationed here, and not soldiers, for he knew that nothing of his would be touched or spoiled.

December 31, Sianfu.—On the 15th Tung joined us at Hua Chou, having completed his business at Sianfu. When he heard details about T'ung Kuan, he also was of opinion that we should have been all right had we remained. On the 17th the boy got back with the dressings and drugs, and we started off at once for Hua Yen Hsien, a place twelve miles this side of T'ung Kuan, the army having marched on to this place two days previously. We reached there about 8 p.m., and found that we were just in the nick of time, for there had been fighting during the day, and they were just bringing the wounded back. Tung quickly found a place where we could

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

see the wounded, and that evening we must have seen about thirty odd, our little hospital being soon filled up. We were very busy on the five succeeding days, and must have seen nearly 150 wounded. On December 21 the Shensi troops retook T'ung Kuan, and then fighting ceased. We sent the next day to see if the drugs and other things we had left were still there, but found them all gone, among them my cabin trunk. Not only so, but they had dug up the floor and dug out the walls of the rooms we occupied to see if there was any silver there. They had not molested the inhabitants at all.

On the 23rd a good number of the soldiers returned to Sianfu, and many of the patients were very anxious to go back also—indeed, we could not persuade them to stay—and as we had no chloroform (having lost it at T'ung Kuan), I decided to take them back to Sianfu myself. Dr. Young had gone west to see the wounded, and Dr. Charter was alone, so I felt bound to return to help him. On the same day nearly twenty returned with me, and I was able to change their dressings and attend to them a little on the road. It snowed for two days, which made it rather unpleasant for those who were being carried back, but all arrived safely. You will see, therefore, that I spent my Christmas travelling on the road in a Chinese cart.

I got back here on December 26, and found that they were expecting the relief party from Tai Yuan Fu with the people from Suite-chow and Yen-anfu. They arrived on December 28th. I expect you will have heard all about them, as I suppose the papers

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

have given reports of their expedition. It was very fine of them to come in that way. They appear to have had very little difficulty except on one or two occasions, so I hope that they will get through to the coast in like manner. They were extremely anxious to take every lady down to the coast, but Mrs. Shorrocks is remaining with Mr. Shorrocks. Dr. and Mrs. Young and I are also remaining. All the rest, I expect, will go back, starting on January 3rd. Mr. and Mrs. Watson, Mr. and Mrs. Borst-Smith, and Dr. and Mrs. Charter and Miss Watt, whose furloughs are due, are all returning home. The rest will, I expect, stay at the coast.

We have seen a large number of wounded, and have now about 120 in-patients here, in addition to those who can walk and come daily. The result is that we are well known throughout the army, and our work seems to be appreciated. I think, therefore, that there is no cause for anxiety about us. We are very busy indeed. It is almost impossible to cope with the work, and to do it efficiently is out of the question. We have got three or four extra boys in, but it is impossible to give the personal attention to each patient as we would wish. Dr. Young will be back from the west in a day or two, and then we shall remain here together. These weeks have been full of God's care for us. Someone remarked to me the other day: "I would rather have the chariots of fire than all the escorts in the world." The "chariots of fire" have been very real during these last weeks, and I have been very fit the whole time.

* * * * *

Summoned to T'ung Kuan.

The graphic pen of Mr. Keyte* must be called into requisition to give a further description of the march of that pitiful procession of the wounded transport train back to Sianfu on Christmas Eve: "Here a wounded man sitting in a chair slung between two poles; there a party of four carrying a door, and on it a man with a leg broken, splintered by a fragment of shell; for another a litter had been improvised, laid on ropes stretched between two poles. The soft snow fell persistently all the night before their start, and the world lay white around them, save where the trampled highroad wound on ahead. At last the stage was reached, and they found a good inn, doors and windows unburnt, and brick beds capable of being fired. Here, then, they laid the wounded, and in and out went the surgeon (Dr. Robertson), with his one raw assistant provided by the Red Cross. The feeble light from a Chinese lantern fell on the primitive equipment—a few pots, an enamel washbowl or two, some dressings, and a few tabloids, that was all—and always the pitiful appeals to the surgeon for the 'stop-the-pain medicine.'

"Christmas Day dawned clear, cold, still. Over all there brooded peace, covering even the piteousness of the grim procession with its soft promise. Probably, to one man only in that crowd was the promise articulate. The young Church of China has its own fresh, naïve joy, but the gracious memories which cluster round the Christmas festival are for those in the homelands. To the heart of the Eng-

* "The Passing of the Dragon," pp. 102-104.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

lishman this Christmas morn, in its beauty and stillness, brought a message of glory. Someone must be told, someone must share the knowledge, that it is the birthday of the Christ-Child, and the Red Cross boy, to whom the cross of his badge meant so little, was told something of the mystery.

“It was all very far from home, and from what Christmas may mean there. There were no carols, no joyous greetings; but joy sang nevertheless in the Doctor’s heart, for it is given to those who enter into the love of Christ to know that His Church, elect from every nation, is yet one o’er all the earth. There came memories of the Christmas at home, of a stately church wherein the worshippers had united in intercession for all who on Christmas Day were travellers, and *for all who were lonely*.* But distance was no bar to worship. There was possible, even on this Chinese highroad, an abundant entrance into its fellowship.

“On the next day bearers and wounded reached the Mission Hospital at Sianfu, and the surgeon plunged into the hospital, crammed and overflowing with wounded.”

* These two petitions are characteristic of our worship at Regent’s Park Chapel on Christmas Day, as Dr. Robertson remembered.—F. B. M.

CHAPTER IX

BACK AGAIN AT SIANFU

It is necessary at this point to insert an explanatory note, the facts of which have been collated from the thrilling account of the Relief Expedition by the Rev. Ernest F. Borst-Smith, entitled, "Caught in the Chinese Revolution."

After it was known at Peking that not only the whole of the Manchu population in Sianfu had been practically exterminated, but that eight foreigners had been massacred, the Rev. J. C. Keyte, M.A., who had just returned from furlough in England, decided that at all costs, accompanied or alone, he would help those in the interior, whose lives were imperilled, to escape to the coast. The story of the Relief Expedition has been already fully told, and it is not necessary to repeat it here. Suffice it to say that eight others joined him in carrying out his plans, and that they passed through the country, gathering up missionaries in lonely outposts, and advancing through the midst of the unsettled and menacing populations. Finally, they reached Sianfu, and the serious question arose as to who of the missionary staff should take advantage of their presence and share their escort to the coast.

Fighting was going on around the city, and several

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

branch hospitals within the walls had been improvised, as we have seen. Dr. Young and Dr. Robertson felt it impossible to leave. Dr. and Mrs. Charter, who had passed through some of the most anxious days of the Revolution, also decided to remain, but their decision was overruled by the consideration that a doctor might be needed to render assistance to members of the Relief Party on their dangerous journey to the coast. As their furlough was in any case almost due, they therefore consented to accompany the expedition. A large contingent of missionaries, accordingly, joined the Relief Party, and the only members of the English staff that were left were Mr. and Mrs. Shorrocks and their daughter Mary, Dr. and Mrs. Young and their little boy, and Dr. Robertson.

The procession that left Sianfu on January 4 was a long one, being more than double the size of that which had entered the city on December 28th. The entire company numbered 150 persons, including Chinese, with ninety-three animals.

These notes will explain the references in Dr. Robertson's diary, to which we now return:

January 2, 1912.—You say in your letter we can only reach you by way of heaven, but one begins to find out in days like these how certain that way is. We have had to-day a message that Yuan-shih-kai is sending up an escort for us at the request of some of the Ambassadors, but if we medicals can possibly stay I think we shall do so, as we have so many patients to care for. You may rest assured con-

Back Again at Sianfu.

cerning us, for the whole army here are our friends; and if the Imperialist forces were to capture the city, we know that they are equally anxious to see that we are safe. We have had to get another house to-day for more patients, so now we have three houses going, with about 130 in-patients, in addition to those coming daily for dressings.

January 6.—Everything seems very quiet in the city just now, and except that many shops are not open, all appears quite as usual. What the future has in store we cannot know. The only thing is that, whatever rowdyism there is, we are almost certain to be all right, for the robbers are our friends, as are their chiefs, who are most of them in the army. One cannot help feeling that the fact of all these people being under obligation to us is one more of God's ways of protecting and caring for us in these days, when things are very unstable and those in power may be overturned at any time.

January 14.—We are very busy here. It is now just about 9 p.m., and this is the first time to-day that I have been able to sit down, although it is Sunday. I am looking forward to a nice quiet Sunday some time. I wonder when! It will be a great treat some day to reach a place where one can attend an English service again. These days that are so full are very trying, and one tends to get a bit irritable with patients who are worrying and clamouring to be seen when I am busy with other folk. It is difficult for them to believe that they will all be seen by someone in the course of the day. This is fine surgical experience, but there are some

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

aspects which are too terrible altogether. One question has been often on my mind of late: "Am I learning the things which God is wanting to teach me in all this?" I trust so, but we have been so busy, so full of work, and I have had so much change, so many journeys, that there has not been the time for quiet that one could have wished; yet in the midst of everything there is the comfort of prayer. It is good to prove the reality of these things at such a time as this.

January 21.—We get a bit tired at times, but otherwise are very well, and I am very glad that we have remained up here. I do hope we may get news of peace before long. If we get many more wounded, I do not know what we shall do with them. Another place has been opened for us on the other side of the road to-day, and I expect we shall get another fifty or sixty wounded from the west this week, as there has been more fighting, and it is likely that there will be still more. Anyway, I hope it is going to stop before the weather gets warmer, or else I fear we shall see something worse than war here. May anything in the nature of an epidemic be averted!

January 21.—The latest news is by wire from Hankow, and the peace prospects are hopeful. We are still as busy as we can be; indeed, there is more work than two men can adequately attend to, and it is the more trying, as patients cannot be looked after as they should be. The ordinary hospital administration is so difficult to work under present conditions. A hundred and one details, that would

Back Again at Sianfu.

be easy enough at home, out here are next to impossible. The only thing is to compare it, not with what might be, but with what might have been. Numbers of patients have said to us: "If you had not been here, it would have been all up with us." The soldiers of some of the regiments tell us that their whole regiment will escort us home to England when we go! So there is real appreciation, though I guess some think that we are getting plenty of silver out of the job. It would have been absolutely impossible to leave, unless one were as heartless as some of the Chinese, and I could never have consented to leaving here at this juncture with a clear conscience. The soldiers seem very willing to listen to the Gospel just now. When I was going round late one night, and most of the patients were asleep, I found one man with three or four others round him. He was the only one who could read, and he was reading the Gospel to the others. I have also noticed several Gospels open, as if they had recently been read. Another evening, in one of the rooms, a man asked me if I would send a teacher to explain a text that had been given to him on a little card. None in that room could read, and they wanted someone who would explain to them the Gospel. There has been much that has been disappointing, but I have been astounded at some of the results.

January 27.—We have had a lot more wounded in from the west, and have had to open another place for them, so now we have nearly 350 on our hands. It is absurd, when one thinks of it. Middlesex Hospital with two doctors! We have ceased

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

seeing ordinary out-patients now, because the wounded are too many. Sundays are now just like other days, and I am afraid that the numbers are not likely to diminish just yet.

February 3.—The Red Cross people are working well with us. They are running two of our extra hospitals, while the Foreign Office are running the other two. The head of the Red Cross—an awfully nice fellow—was in here the other day. I was operating at the time, and at the end of the operation he said: “Are you not cold without your fur gown on?” I explained the impossibility of working in a fur gown, and he has sent along to Dr. Young and me a beautiful little fur-lined jacket with short sleeves, specially for working in the wards and operating-room.

February 18.—Chinese New Year’s Day, and Sunday, too. I have the prospect of a real Sunday, the first for many weeks, which I mean to enjoy to the full. Despite of fears of strife within the city, and threatened dangers without, we have arrived at New Year’s Day in peace, for which we are profoundly thankful. A week ago the Red Cross folk gave a feast, to which several of the Generals were invited and all the foreigners. I could not go myself, but I heard there were some speeches. Mr. Shorrocks preached a sermon, and the head of the Red Cross said that if men were to work in the Red Cross they must do it for love, and must look upon the wounds of the wounded as their own wounds, and treat them thus. This is pretty advanced for a Chinaman!

Back Again at Sianfu.

February 25.—As the other day I returned through the West Gate to the city I was a little amused when the soldiers—about twenty of them—rose and stood at attention. I wondered who I was to receive such a mark of respect!

March 2.—You will be glad to know that there has been a much better spirit among the assistants here lately. They have been more sympathetic in their attitude, and have started a prayer meeting once a week on their own initiative. I hope that this spirit will be maintained.

March 10.—It has been good to know in these busy days, when we have had but little time to spend in private prayer and communion, that you at home have been bearing us up. That knowledge is a real help, and I sometimes think that it is perhaps for the sake of us here that the danger and difficulty, which at times have been so near, have been averted.

March 15.—A few days ago another small town was taken by the Mohammedans. It had been occupied the day before by about 1,000 Shensi troops. The next day the Mohammedans surrounded and entered it, slaughtering practically the whole force. Poor Shensi! What a severe atonement they have had to make for the slaughter of the Manchus! How many scores of families have lost one or more members! Thank God, it is now practically over!

I have been out this afternoon to the Shorrocks—the first time for a month. We feel extremely glad to think that we remained here. It has been so manifestly God's purpose for us. Let me tell you

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

one thing. After the party left for the coast in January, letters were sent to us which, if they had reached us in time, would probably have compelled us to leave the city; but they did not reach us, though others did. Was not that wonderful? I have seen so much more of God's guidance and control of events in the last six months, sufficient to dispel any doubts as to His hand being in our lives; and if so, it must be in the affairs of nations. Otherwise, one's faith must break down. It is difficult to see why all this slaughter was permitted, but it must be part of the working out of a purpose.

March 20.—What a delight a real spring morning is! It is one of God's good and perfect gifts. The only way is to lean hard on Him. But what a perverse spirit one sometimes seems to have—knowing well the way one ought to go, but seeming to be so far from it. One thing is certain—this leaning and an increasing knowledge of Him cannot be sudden and quick. It has to be a growth, but we ought not to grow too slowly, ought we? The Shorrocks are with us now, as there is danger of the soldiers looting the East Suburb. We can only hope that all will be settled before long, but there are some aspects which are serious. We cannot but think, however, that there is some way of deliverance, as so many times has been the case during the last few months. And we know that the hosts of the Lord are encamped about us. What a sense of stability there is in that!

April 4.—I have had my work considerably increased, as Dr. Young is ill with appendicitis. He

Back Again at Sianfu.

is a little better to-day, and I am hoping very much that he will get well enough to go to the coast, where conditions are more favourable. You can well understand that this is the source of no little anxiety, but one finds out in these days the truth of, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Besides, our staying here with all this work has been so markedly overruled, in almost every detail, that I believe this will be clear and plain too. This thought helps one to keep less disturbed, though one's anxiety about Young is not lessened. It seems strange to us that this should have happened, but it must have a place in the plan. The drugs, which we have been wanting so much, have arrived to-day, at a time when we had run through our own stock of chloroform, having only one bottle left. So you see it has come just in time. As Mrs. Young remarked: "It looks as if someone has been managing this affair who knew how to time things."

April 21.—How strange are God's leadings! How little we calculated on this illness of Dr. Young; but it must be in the plan. I am glad to say that he is better, but exactly what our future course will be we have not quite decided. . . .

April 23.—Young had a relapse yesterday morning, and I felt that the only thing to do was to operate on him right away. I did so in the afternoon, and, judging from the conditions, it was well that I did so. Mrs. Young was present, one of our assistants giving the anæsthetic, and another helping me. Mrs. Young was a brick! There are few women who could have done what she did.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

It was a tremendous strain, but I was wonderfully helped. God is able to do exceedingly above all that we think. One finds this out more and more. I almost forgot that it was Dr. Young. It is now twenty-four hours after the operation, and he is going on as well as one could wish. I have every hope that he will get better. If all goes well, and he makes a good convalescence, we all hope to get away for a holiday.

April 25.—Young is improving, but I am still a little anxious.

April 28.—The last three days there have been special meetings—the Half-Yearly Church Conference. Before these meetings there is always a special subscription-list for the upkeep of the church. The soldiers in our hospitals have contributed, though their pay has been by no means liberal, £2 5s. ! I am glad to say that I feel really better than before Dr. Young's operation, having been stimulated by the pleasure and relief of his good progress. Truly we have experienced the mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord !

May 19.—We have been able to get some of the wards at the military hospitals into much more hospital order. When the patients first came in, in January, we had to do the best we could; most of them sleeping on straw on the floor, covered by mats. As soon as they could be procured, trestle beds and straw palliasses were prepared; but in the winter, Chinese do not like to be in separated beds, with each man in a bed. It is not warm enough, so they had all the beds together, resulting

Back Again at Sianfu.

in considerable overcrowding. But there was no help for it, and we had to give in. But now that the warm weather has come, and many of the patients have gone, we have had all the rooms, previously separated by partitions, thrown into one, and each man has a bed. They have shown themselves much more willing to acquiesce in what we recommend than formerly, and in one place I have between twenty and thirty men sleeping outside—a great accomplishment! Another thing in which we have found a great difference is in taking of milk. Usually Chinese patients are very unwilling to take milk; but the last three or four months they have not only been willing but anxious to do so, believing that there is some special virtue in it. It is very leaping, too, to see how attentively they listen to the Evangelists. Our two Evangelists are very keen, and I frequently come upon one or other of them in the wards, with a few men listening and sometimes asking questions. I have seen also some of our own staff talking to patients or explaining a Bible passage, or helping them to read. A little cripple boy with a happy face I have several times seen occupied in this way. Daily prayers, too, are a more living act than they used to be. I have been specially pleased also in the change which has taken place in our senior assistant. He told me some time ago that he had given up taking prayers, because he felt his bad temper and taking prayers did not go together. I told him that he had given up the wrong thing, and in the last three months there has been a marked

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

change, which has had a beneficial effect on all the others.

June 1.—We have been trying to arrange for the establishment of an Institute for permanently disabled soldiers. The General, of whom I have written previously, Chang Yün Shan, when he heard about it, and understood the idea, wept because it was a foreigner who had thought about it for his soldiers, and not he himself. To think that his love for his soldiers was so small that he had not thought about it! No wonder that his soldiers love him, and will do anything for him. He is a remarkable man, of very strong emotions, and has given about £140 to us to be spent at our direction for this purpose. We shall not have the control of this establishment, but he gave the money to us because he knew that it would not be wasted.

June 9.—The city authorities have said that they want to pay our travelling expenses down to the railway, so that looks as though they have really appreciated our staying up here.

June 17.—We have had to go to three feasts, which take up half a day. One was at the invitation of the Red Cross Society, one at the invitation of one of the Generals, Chang Yün Shan, and the other at the invitation of the War Office. Some time ago we suggested that they should have a sort of Chelsea Hospital for the disabled, and they have taken up the idea very readily. The place has just been started. They call it, "Pity the Wounded Hospital," and the feast to-day took place at the new Institute. The head men of the different

Back Again at Sianfu.

offices were present, including the head of the province and the General spoken of above. These two were originally the heads of the Young China Party and the Elder Brethren Society, and have not been on good terms, so it was very interesting to see them together.

June 23.—Most of the head men of the new régime are anxious for me to remain in the city for a while longer, so I felt that the decision to do so, which we had come to on the previous night, was the right one. This week we have received two more scrolls and tablets. The Church have given us each scrolls describing our virtues, and the General has given us each a tablet and two scrolls. These are a personal affair.

June 29.—A further presentation was made to-day of a tablet extolling our virtues, and of an umbrella. The umbrella is a large silk one, with the names of subscribers in gold on it, among which are the names of the General of one of the two divisions—the man who held Chi'en Chou against the Moham-medans for three months—and of the Commander of his bodyguard. There are also the names of nearly 300 wounded who have been treated by us. For the fact that they are given by the men themselves, these things are specially valuable. Most of the soldiers are members of the renowned Elder Brethren Secret Society, and among them are some of the leaders here. This is rather remarkable, for this society was formerly always feared as being anti-foreign.

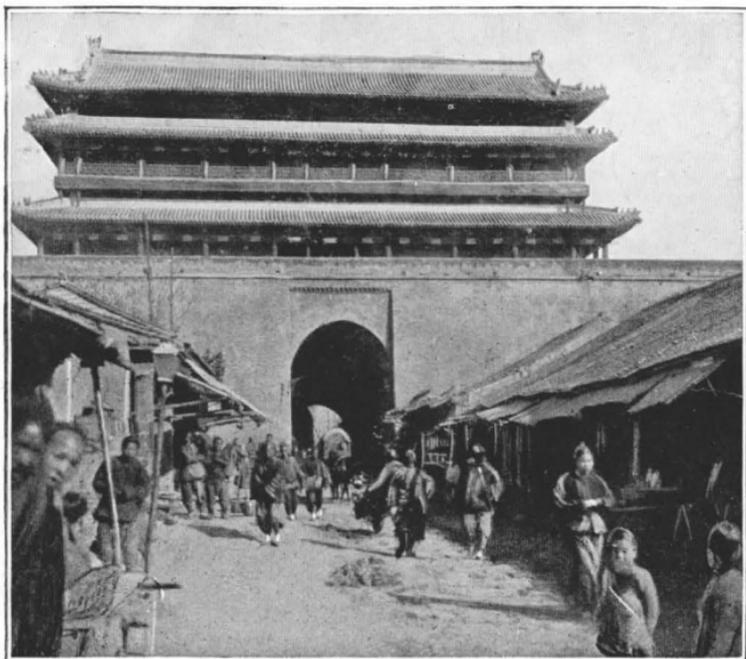
(The Shorrocks and Youngs have left. What a send-off they had !)

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

July 12.—It is astonishing how many things have happened to prevent my going away. However, it must be all in the plan, so it's all right.

July 19.—I am now on the road to Honanfu. Quite a number of the soldiers came to see me off, which I appreciated very much. It was very nice of them; an action like that on their part was specially pleasing, as there was no obligation. I do hope that these few weeks away will make me more fit in every way for next year's work. Despite all God's wonderful dealings with us during these few months, I feel somehow that I have made so little progress. How one does long for more practical holiness! Perhaps one makes the mistake of looking for some wonderful revelation of divine power instead of bringing our wills to bear on the matter, for I believe that faith and holiness are much more a question of the will than of the emotions.

During those months of special stress this year I sometimes had to run right away to my room for a while, and it helped me when I looked up those passages which speak about the people thronging our Lord. There was no gate-keeper and no organization in those days to make people see Him in order, no one to keep them from all clamouring at once to be seen by Him. I think that I have learned this year to know a little of what His patience meant under those circumstances, for He was tempted in all points like as we are; but when one thinks calmly about these people, their needs, difficulties, and sorrows, and when one thinks that He is ever by our side, we ought to be patient with



THE EAST GATE OF SIANFU.



DR. CECIL ROBERTSON RECEIVING GIFT OF TABLET AND
UMBRELLA. (See p. 131.)

Back Again at Sianfu.

them. One has to become truly humble in mind to be able to enter into other folk's difficulties and to be truly sympathetic. It is so easy to appear unselfish and humble to other people when all the time one is proud of being thought so. How subtle temptation is! Instead of seeking for all these special virtues in oneself, one ought to meditate more on the Lord Jesus Christ, on those virtues as they are in Him, and, above all, on His love. Then these things would come into our lives unconsciously, and that is how they ought to come. It seems as though one knows so much of the theory of it all, as to how it ought to be done, but far too little about the reality and practice of it. When one gets out here, I think one begins to see the influences of one's past life in their true perspective, and one owes to home much the larger proportion of whatever good one is able to do; and I have learned that love and sympathy count for more than learning and skill, and indeed anything else.

* * * * *

In a subsequent letter Dr. Robertson gave the following general epitome of his well-earned holiday:

I left here in the middle of July, usually the hottest time of the year for travelling, and determined to take the *car-de-luxe* (which is the sedan-chair) in the road journey to Honanfu. My bearers were Szechuenese, all of them opium-smokers. It is a marvel to me what physical endurance these opium-smoking chair-bearers have. They can go for thirty miles a day, and come in at the end almost

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

with a sprint, and appear quite fresh. But non-opium-smokers can do a great deal more: they can go for another ten miles a day, if it is not kept up too long. An escort appointed by the Foreign Office accompanied me, and we reached Honanfu without incident worthy of note. It was interesting to go over the road which was the scene of conflict last winter between the Imperialists and the Shensi Revolutionaries. A night at Honanfu, and the next day we boarded the train for Cheng-Chou, the junction for Hankow. The first hour or two in a train, after two or three years in the interior, is a novel experience. At first one feels very much like the country cousin who is paying his first visit to London, but the experience very soon ceases to be novel, and becomes normal once more. Fortunately, we did not have to wait long for a steamer to take us down the Yang-tse-Kiang to Kiu-Kiang. What a delight that river journey was! such a refreshing change after the Shensi plains and the Honan gorges! On arrival we lost no time in getting to the river's bank and fixing up coolies and chairs to take us up the Kuling Mountain.

Two hours across a blazing hot plain, covered by the green rice gently waving in the breeze; another three hours to the top of the hill—and what a climb it is! Feelings of pity make the passenger dismount and start climbing himself; but he soon finds out his weakness, and again gets into his chair. But these men with their magnificent physique go on without fatigue, taking the inclines steadily, and running down the declines at a rate that makes one

Back Again at Sianfu.

shudder. What a surprise Kuling itself is! Perched up on the top of a hill, and stretching along little dips among the peaks, it is well laid out with foreign-built bungalows, in such a way that almost all have a wide view out beyond the peaks themselves, across the Yang-tse Valley. The air is delicious, but to a resident from the interior of China it was a delight to get into a foreign community once more, to see little children and old people, and to have all the delights of social intercourse with those of kindred spirit. How stirring, too, to stroll along the central avenue on a Sunday evening, with the clear, star-lit sky overhead, and first on one side and then on the other to hear the sound of hymn-singing break out on the stillness, or to hear some sacred song which reminded one of happy Sunday evenings long since in the old home!

A fortnight here soon sped away, and once more we got down to the hot plain.

After spending two or three hours at Kiu-Kiang, we again embarked, and in twenty-four hours reached Nanking. There was only half a day to give to it, but one got something of an impression of this large city, with its macadamized roads, its twenty-mile wall, its foreign shops, and the buildings which are springing up everywhere now. At midnight we boarded the train, and were in Shanghai early the next morning. After a few days there, mostly spent in shopping, I started for Japan. But a fortnight in that beautiful country was only long enough to make one wish to visit it again. Probably one is hardly justified in giving an impression of the

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

people after so short a visit, but I could not help feeling glad that I am fixed in China rather than Japan. There seemed to me something less stable and lasting about the Japanese character; but they are extremely courteous and anxious to help a stranger.

On my return to China I visited first Tientsin and then Peking. There it is not so much the place that inspires one as the memory of some of the important and stirring events that have occurred in this the centre of the Court and of the political intrigues of the Chinese Empire. Here, too, one could meditate at the Temple of Heaven on those yearly ceremonies in which many Emperors have taken part. But to the medical missionary the most interesting thing is the Union Medical College, where an attempt is being made to give the hundred students a course as far as possible like ours at home.

Leaving Peking, twenty hours' journey brought me back to the junction of Cheng-Chou, and the rest of my journey was just the reverse of my journey down. It was good to get away to entirely fresh scenes, but it is good to be back again. We have regained a more or less normal condition, and are now looking forward to Dr. Jenkins's return.

CHAPTER X

THE LAST LEAVES OF HIS DIARY

(OCTOBER 6, 1912, TO MARCH 16, 1913)

October 6, 1912.—Back once again in Sianfu. It is good to be back again. We had a warm welcome from Keyte. Bell came over in the evening, and we had a day's conference on Thursday. As you may imagine, there are many things to do to get into ship-shape again. Nearly all our patients have been moved to the Red Cross Hospital, where they have been looked after by the Chinese doctor from the Medical College, Peking. There are only eighteen here just now, and that gives me the opportunity of getting things fixed up before getting into full swing again. There are many new difficulties and problems awaiting solution, and we need much wisdom in knowing how to direct things aright. One feels how small, how feeble, we ourselves are in face of these things. There is the Red Cross Hospital and the home for the disabled, in which though not run by us, we to some extent at least have a part. They come to us for advice, and express a desire that we should co-operate, which indeed we are glad to do. But it is not now a question of association for a few months, but of getting a basis which shall be of a permanent char-

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

acter between them and us. We hope to make an arrangement satisfactory to both sides, as there is a great opportunity for the Gospel in both these places, and at the Red Cross Hospital there is quite a nice little hall where services are conducted every Sunday. In addition to this there is all the Church work, the evangelistic work, and the clerical work associated with the mission and the hospital. Just Keyte and I until the end of the year, when Jenkins will be back, and we hope others. Doesn't it seem terrible to think that now is the time of opportunity, such an one as we may never have again, and only two or three young men to attack it? But "one with God is a majority."

October 21.—It is so easy to get keen and find, if you look into your motives, that the keenness is rather for the success of your own little project than for the main object of the glorifying of Christ.

October 27.—Services are being held at the home for disabled soldiers every night. I went to one this week. It was fine to have that audience of sixty or seventy listening intently without any disorder or restlessness. That home is a good piece of work, and though *we* talked about it at first, the credit is entirely due to the men who carried it through, especially Mr. Shih, who is now at the head of it.

November 17.—Some day we shall get a true proportion in our estimation of what people accomplish. "They also serve who only stand and wait." Maybe their service is more effectual.

December 2.—It will be almost Christmas by the time this reaches you. It will be a different one for

The Last Leaves of His Diary.

all of us—more peaceful and free from anxiety. This will be my fourth away from home. There have been quite a number of opium-smokers at the Chelsea Hospital, and arrangements have been made to help them to give up this fatal habit. A special courtyard has been allotted to them, into which they are locked. Not a few took opium to deaden the pains of their wounds, while others have taken it for years. We first went round collecting the pipes, etc. After this no man who smokes will be allowed in the place. May the new year bring to us all more of that peace and tranquillity of mind which comes to those stayed upon Jehovah. It may bring various changes, and whatever it brings of opportunity may we be ready for it.

December 22.—Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Creasey Smith have arrived here this week, and it was good to see them. They are living at the hospital with Keyte and me, and we are quite a happy little party.

December 30.—Christmas Day we spent quite quietly. It was bitterly cold, and in the evening it snowed. We had a service here in the hospital in the morning, after which I saw the women out-patients. The two post-office men came here to dinner; then we all went out to the East Suburb to tea with the Donald Smiths, and to an English service. I am afraid that the friends from China have been saying a great deal too much about what I have done here, and, after all, what a little it is when we think of all the great love of our Lord! I think sometimes that we must so injure His love. We do things ostensibly for Him, but there is so

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

much that must wound Him in it. We were thinking of Malachi together to-day, and I was looking up some of Dr. Campbell Morgan's notes. It speaks there of the sensitiveness of God's love, and how, though they had got the form of the old services going on in the Temple, there was so much that wearied God and disappointed Him. We think so much of coming up to the expectation of friends and other people, but to come up to God's expectation—not to disappoint Him—that is success. And much can come through prayer. One recalls the times when we and others got to the impasses of life, when there seemed no way, either physically or spiritually, when everything seemed black darkness. At these times He has not been a disappointment to us, and now in the daily task we ought not to disappoint Him.

Two of our hospital boys are being baptized.

January 5, 1913.—You would be pleased to see how my boy looks after me. He is about thirty, but seems younger, and he is such a real Christian. I think I have seen few Chinese who have so manifestly the Christian spirit. I have taken the service at the hospital this morning. It always seems such a responsibility to take one of the larger services, but I sometimes think that we ought to regard a conversation with a single individual as a much more responsible work, for the opportunity of impressing him is proportionately greater.

January 13.—It is difficult to say what are the necessary qualifications for people who come out here. God uses such manifold varieties of people.

The Last Leaves of His Diary.

But of one thing I am confident—no mere pity for the degraded state of the Chinese will stand. The only thing that can possibly keep one keen is a knowledge of the love of Christ and a love for Him. Directly one's love wanes one's pity wanes, too; and instead of pitying, one gets annoyed with the things which are constantly present to irritate. The only thing that can get over that is a greater love, or, rather, love for a greater Person. That is the only thing that will stand. There is a tower of strength in the Bible, for those who constantly study and live in it. It is that strength that one needs out here.

As to our future plans, it is suggested that a man should go from here, as soon as the students from Hankow come back, to take up the medical work at Suite-chow. Of course, the man to go must be myself, because Jenkins has built up the work here. Before I knew anything of the resolutions of the Committee, I had been thinking about the future of the medical work in this province, and the desirability of staffing the station in the north with a medical, and it had occurred to me that it would be the best thing for me to go there. I have therefore volunteered at the Conference here to go, and I expect, if arrangements are made for the proper staffing of this station, that I shall go up there; but it could not be till the beginning of 1914. Of course, all appointments are liable to change out here, as one never knows what may happen; but I think that I should enjoy the work in an absolutely new place. Not that I am anxious to leave here. After all the clear guidance of last year, we ought not to

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

doubt that the same will be given to us this year, and, indeed, always.

January 19.—Six of the men at the Chelsea are very keen on learning to read, and now they each have a Bible of their own, and were very anxious to attend some recent meetings that we held. One of our hospital boys also has recently been baptized. He was with Dr. Young at Chi'en Chou, and when asked why he had changed his attitude to Christianity, replied: "It was when I saw Dr. Young spend himself for the Chinese soldiers here and working so hard. It made my heart receive a 'moving,' and it inspired me." This is a tribute to Young, who is truly a saint. God has given us good things, hasn't He? Not the least of them is the love of one's dear ones at home, and of friends. I feel that I have had this in abundance. There has been so little of sorrow, so little of discipline by personal trial for me. I am staying in a beautiful Christian home. It does not need possessions to make a home, but just love; and they have real love here in abundance, and it is not superficial.

January 24.—My little stay away has done me much good. The Lord seemed so near in that home, and I could not help feeling that if friends can have such an uplifting influence, how much more would the constant companionship of our Saviour. I seem to have been brought nearer to Him. It is a long time since I have felt so conscious of having received spiritual blessing, and one, too, which leads me so directly nearer to our Master. I feel so grateful to Him for using this to bring me

The Last Leaves of His Diary.

nearer to Him. This makes me feel so happy. The Lord Himself seemed so present, and it is for this that I rejoice. I do long to walk with Him, and do my utmost for Him. The Opium Refuge at the Pensioners' Hospital is over now, but if twenty out of the forty are really rid of it, that is good.

February 2.—There is much here now to give us cause for anxiety—at least, not anxiety, but we are made to feel how much we need to be guided by God. There is a movement among the older Church members to have an Independent Church. I suppose that every missionary hopes to see this some day, but wants at the same time to feel that it is led of God. We shall have to be ready to take a second place, and instead of being leaders, perhaps be servants.

February 25.—The thought of the Lord's nearness has been very precious to me of late, but how it reveals one's own failures and shortcomings! May we know the blessed Lord's presence in every time and every circumstance! May He be to us the altogether lovely One! I think sometimes, if we only knew Him as He is to be known, in that intimate way that John knew Him, and others of the saints have known Him, we should never want to leave Him nor take our eyes from Him. We should never want to do anything that would hurt Him at all. May He be all this and more, for I cannot speak of Him in suitable language.

CHAPTER XI

THE TRIUMPHANT END

AFTER Dr. Robertson's return from the coast in September, 1912, as we have gathered from his diary, he set about the readjustment and improvement of the hospital organization and administration, which during the revolutionary days had been largely in abeyance. With Dr. Jenkins he instituted a new nursing department, and the two looked forward to a rapid development of the work in the immediate future.

He was equally keen on the evangelistic side of the work, and was always faithful in attending the devotional exercises with the patients and helpers, taking a considerable share in the leading of worship and in Biblical exposition. He used to take a regular share in the religious services of the Chinese Red Cross Hospital, and at the Chelsea Hospital, which, as we have seen, owed its institution to his own suggestion. It was his custom to visit there on two evenings a week, taking the evening service, and entering into personal intercourse with the inmates. On finding that several of the men were taking opium, he started a vigorous opium-cure work to enable them to break off the pernicious habit. This effort was crowned with good results.

The Triumphant End.

He was specially happy in his relations with the Chinese authorities. From the first he had hit on the right way of dealing with them. Too shrewd to be easily deceived, he never became cynical; whilst he was too generous and manly to bear grudges against those who would have imposed on him. His sunny and happy disposition made him the friend of all, and it is probable that in three brief years he secured a position of influence over the ruling classes which in other cases could only be gained by years of laborious effort. He had also many friends among the Swedish missionaries, the Catholic Fathers, and other missionary families; but he was careful to let none of these social attentions detract from his Chinese duties. He continued as keen as ever on language-study, and tried to make time for it, that he might become freer in his preaching. For his devotional life he pursued the habit of early rising, as providing the only opportunity for uninterrupted Bible-study and prayer. It was characteristic also that he arranged for the morning service of the missionary circle to include "some grind as well as devotion," and the brethren undertook the systematic study of Dr. Adam Smith's "Minor Prophets."

Mr. Keyte, who was his companion at this time, writes: "It was a delightful life which we lived together. He was never tired of expatiating on the way in which he had been taught to see the working of God's plan and care in the occurrences of 1911-12. He was of the opinion that the story of what had happened ought not to be lost. He had

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

evidently been greatly developed in certain aspects of the Christian life by what he and others had experienced of the grace of God and communion with Him in times of distress. 'All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children,' would, I think, best express the sequence."

So life went quietly and happily forward through those quiet months, only there was an evident ripening and maturing of character which was anticipative of the great vision of the Christ which was so suddenly and gloriously to break on him.

On February 16 he writes to his mother: "On Tuesday we got a message from a man who is travelling down from Kansu with his family, saying that his little boy of two years old was ill with smallpox. He wanted us to send up some quicker method of bringing him down, and fearing lest his child might be bad, I went up myself with a chair, riding on my horse, and taking with me a man, who rode another horse lent by Mr. Ross, the post-master. The letter was dated from a place *four days'* journey away—Pin-chou, in the west. Somehow I missed them on the road, and could hear nothing of their having passed through various places where I made inquiries. I pushed on till I reached, *in two days*, the place from which they had sent the letter, but found that they had left three or four days before. It was rather trying, but the only thing I could do was to come back again. I reached home this morning. It was a fairly hard ride, but it has shown me that I am far

The Triumphant End.

fitter than I thought I was, for I had to take long stages, and to do a good deal of walking to save the horse."

In a letter received from Mr. Ross, narrating the same incident, there are one or two very characteristic touches, which reveal Dr. Robertson's method and habit so graphically, that it is well worthy of insertion: "You have heard of Dr. Robertson's memorable ride to Pin-chou, at the urgent request of some Kansu missionaries, to save the life of their little baby-boy. He received their note late in the afternoon, and came to my office about 4 p.m. We walked to my house together, and he stayed for tea. I sent my chair with him, and lent him a horse for his servant. The cook also placed some cold meat and cakes in the chair for him. I don't think that he had brought anything with him for his journey. We rode together to the West Gate of the city, and how well I remember that we dismounted there to say good-bye. We lingered together for a minute or two without speaking, and then hurriedly said good-bye. It was then about dark, and he started off alone to ride all night on that dark and lonely road. I returned home, but my thoughts were of him. A few days previous to this journey we had taken a walk together on the city wall, and he told me that he thanked God for not having to go home after the Revolution, as he feared the praise which people might have bestowed on him might have injured him spiritually. He never referred to his experiences here during the trouble unless compelled to. The same afternoon he spoke of the

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

love of Christ, and said that he longed for nothing that the world could give him, but he wanted to be more conscious of the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ. He also spoke of the possibility of his removal from Sianfu, and asked me to pray about it. I never heard Dr. Robertson say an unkind word of anyone. When others criticized in his hearing anyone who was not present, he kept silent to the end, and then would remember and relate something good of the person who had been discussed."

Evidently that journey had told upon him more heavily than he realized, for Dr. Jenkins writes that on March 5 he was reluctantly compelled to take to his bed. His temperature stood at 104°, and he was obliged to give in. "I suppose that he must have caught some typhus infection when he went up to meet the Preedys. He had been back just a fortnight when the fever began, but he had been feeling very indisposed for some days before, though he kept at his post because I was unable to get about, and Dr. Hsiao was also ill with typhus."

"On Friday, the 7th, Dr. Robertson was very depressed because he could not see the meaning of his illness. He had become so accustomed to seek for the inner teaching of God's varied providences for him, that he was disturbed by his inability to read the Father's purpose. But after a day or two he came out into the clear sunlight, and was able to realize the peace of God. The valley of the shadow was entered with all the old courage and the simple faith that his Father God was ordering it all for the

The Triumphant End.

best. His soul was wrapt about with untroubled serenity, and he often said that 'he was quite at peace about it all.' "

" *March 11.*—Cecil has had a good night, and is comfortable this morning. We feel that all is going on as well as we could wish."

" *March 12.*—Cecil has had a fairly good night. The temperature, though still high, is easily kept within bounds. He sends much love to you all, and says he has no pain and is comfortable. All is going on as well as we can expect."

" *March 13.*—Cecil is keeping up fairly well, though very weak. The temperature is a little lower this morning."

" *March 14.*—Cecil is more delirious to-day. We are expecting the crisis in a few days. His pulse is very weak."

Mr. Keyte here takes up the story:

" *March 15.*—Dr. Jenkins is gone to bed with typhus fever. As I write, Cecil is easier and cooler. He is not clear in his mind during these last two days, but is his own dear patient self. Even in delirium, if asked to drink medicine, he catches the idea that he is to do something to oblige someone, and says: 'Oh, certainly.' I hope to be able to-morrow night or Monday to send good news. Cecil says that he is quite happy about all, and can leave it with God."

In his lucid moments he would ask for a verse or two of Scripture to be read to him. Two of the last of these repeated to him by his devoted friend, Mr. Keyte, were: "The Lord is my strength and

Cecil Robertson of Siantu.

my song, and is become my salvation"; and, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." On hearing the latter verse, he responded: "*That is good.*"

It is a very tragic picture. Two doctors too ill to help, and Mr. Keyte left to do his best for them and for Dr. Robertson, who was evidently succumbing to the fatal malady.

On Sunday morning, March 16, he was worse. His temperature had risen to 105°. He ceased to want to get up or in any way exert himself. About 10 a.m. a kind of coma came on, and he continued to grow worse, in spite of the strychnine injections. It became clear that the home-call was near, and that never again in this world would he see the faces of that beloved home-circle to which his heart was ever turning, and who by telegram were already apprised of his danger.

As soon as it became certain that the end must come speedily, the Chinese helpers could not be kept away. No thought of infection would deter them, and they seemed prostrated with grief. Probably he was hardly conscious of their presence. He grew weaker very rapidly, and sank into sleep—the sleep in Jesus—a little past noon. Thus, surrounded by an atmosphere of sorrowing affection, his gentle, noble, and radiant spirit passed into the presence of our Lord.

As the news spread through the city it was received with the profoundest emotion. The soldiers of the Chelsea Home were specially desolate. The beloved body was wrapped in white silk, which was woven there, though not by them. Mr. Shih asked

The Triumphant End.

to be allowed, as representing the rest, to provide a white silk covering for the whole of the outer coffin. At the special request of the city authorities the funeral was delayed for a day, that the various departments of the provincial administration might be represented; and though to one of Dr. Robertson's rare modesty any publicity was distasteful, it was felt that in this case, in view of his influence in the city and with the army, the request should be acceded to. He was their dear friend, and their ardent affection demanded expression.

No flowers had bloomed at that date, but the soldiers and the Red Cross Brigade, the General, and others, sent such artificial wreaths as they could make or procure in the brief space of time at their disposal. The coffin was placed in the worship-hall of the hospital, that those who had loved and honoured Lo Tai Fu (Dr. Robertson) might pay their last tributes of respect and affection.

Finally, the beloved body was borne through the streets of the city under a catafalque provided by General Chang Yün Shan, the former leader of the Ko Lao Hui. It had been decided that the interment should take place in the garden of the Mission Church in the East Suburb. The funeral procession was headed by the cavalry guard and band of the Governor of the Province—the Tutu Chang Feng Hui. Two white banners, borne by soldiers, proclaimed in golden characters to the crowds that lined the streets the fame and virtues of him whose mortal remains were being borne to their last resting-place. On the one the inscription was: "He

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

created happiness throughout the Province of Shensi"; and on the other: "By his grace men were restored to life." Behind the coffin stretched a procession a third of a mile in length.

"And so," writes Mr. Keyte, "we came to the East Gate of the city. It was through this gateway he had ridden that Sabbath morning, October 22, 1911, when the Revolution started. It was over the wall here, when these same gates were fast shut, that he had been drawn into the city to do his healing work. Through it how often he had clattered, the hoofs of his horse ringing on the great stones, on errands of love and mercy! And now we followed him, and realized that never again would that gallant, gracious figure ride through the old gateway, and that this was his last earthly escort. He had loved the old suffering city and its people, he had given himself unstintedly for them in the service of his Lord and Saviour, and now he had gone before. With him it was well—well, indeed—but for us who were left there remained an aching sense of loss and a deep sorrow. And still the band sounded in front, the banners gleamed, and we came out of the cool, dark arch of the gate into the clear sunlight of the long suburb street, and so for a mile to the church."

The Governor of the Province had been delayed, but rode up in full military dress before the memorial service had commenced. He sat through the service on the platform with Mr. Donald Smith and Mr. Keyte, the two missionaries who led the service, and himself addressed the crowded congregation, in

The Triumphant End.

which the Church, the civic and military authorities, and the common soldiers were represented. Of Dr. Robertson's life in and service for Shensi the Governor spoke with genuine feeling, and agreed with the previous speakers that the dynamic for both had been supplied by the Christian doctrine, which he commended to the congregation for their consideration. He explained that he knew but little of that doctrine, but he could understand such a life as had now closed; and he acknowledged that, since Dr. Robertson and all his colleagues attributed the good they had wrought to the inspiration of Christ, then the Christian faith was a factor that could not be ignored. It was considered to be a remarkable tribute of respect that this high official should express himself in this manner, the more so as it was supposed that he was not sympathetic towards religion. But his behaviour throughout was excellent. The whole of this moving and impressive spectacle afforded an opportunity of reaching hundreds of persons, especially of the high official class, who seldom come within hearing of Christian teaching, and it was taken full advantage of.

When the service in the chapel was concluded the congregation streamed into the yard, where a touching incident took place, which is thus narrated by Mr. Ross: "The coffin was in the churchyard, surrounded by soldiers and other friends of Dr. Robertson, most of them weeping bitterly. As I tried to approach to lay a wreath on it, I observed his 'boy' clinging to the head of the coffin and

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

weeping as if his heart would break. This is just what Dr. Robertson did to us all—he made us love him.”

Many maimed and crippled soldiers came on crutches or in carts, and gathered round the grave of “our doctor,” as they called him. While the coffin was being lowered, prayer was offered and a hymn sung. Two large bunches of peach-blossom—the only flowers obtainable—and crosses and wreaths of paper flowers from the Chinese Christians, were strewn in the grave, and with one last lingering look the great gathering slowly dispersed and melted back into the streets of Sianfu. But those who loved Dr. Robertson in England will never recall the respect and affection manifested in Sianfu by the officials, soldiers, and people, without the profoundest gratitude and regard.

As soon as the sad tidings of the death of the beloved physician began to spread, loving tributes to his memory began to pour in. Father Hugh Scallon, one of the Roman Catholic missionaries in Sianfu, wrote: “The Bishop brought us the sad news, and the missionaries, who were assembled for the annual retreat, were deeply affected. They felt that they had lost a friend and benefactor, one ever ready to aid them in times of sickness. My personal opinion is that your English doctors are the hardest worked people in Sianfu, and if they succumb, they die martyrs of charity. If English heroism shows itself at the South Pole, it abounds in the hospital in China. The Bishop commissions me to express to you the heartfelt sympathy of the

The Triumphant End.

Catholic Mission in your sad bereavement, and our trust that Dr. Cecil Robertson is in enjoyment of the reward of a life devoted to the service of God and the alleviation of human suffering. 'Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye have done to one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.' "

To quote Mr. Keyte once more: "Young and strong, a master of his craft, with an unusually wide experience, his removal means a heavy blow to the Baptist Missionary Society, in whose ranks he was proud to be numbered, and for which he held a loyal affection. Of that more intimate sorrow which comes to his own people we may not speak. Like so many of the world's best men, he held that what was of good in him came to him, under God, first and foremost from his mother. In the love of earnest Christian parents and brothers and sisters he was singularly happy. Of the many beside who had helped and influenced his life there remains space but to mention two—names so frequently on his lips—the one his former 'chief,' Sir Alfred Pearce Gould, the other his minister, Rev. F. B. Meyer. To his colleagues here he was ever a brother beloved; by the foreign community generally he was loved and honoured."

It will be remembered that in the awful outbreak of the Revolution a little boy of ten, named Ahlstrand, had been killed by the ruthless band that broke in upon the Swedish Mission House in the South Suburb. His mother wrote: "I must tell you of a dream that I had the night between Satur-

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

day and Sunday. I dreamt, first, that we were busy printing texts on Chinese round cards, with Dr. Robertson's name in the centre; then all of a sudden I heard a voice saying, 'Though he is dead, yet he speaketh,' and by that voice I was awakened in the middle of the night. . . . I am sure that will be true of him, and as his life has been a blessing to all who knew him, his removal will be a call to us all to follow Christ and give ourselves out for others, as he did."

But there were many other tributes of affection that poured in on the sorrowing hearts in England, to whom they came like the healing leaves of the Tree of Life. Of these, the following must serve as specimens:

The *Rev. A. G. Shorrocks*, writing from Tientsin: "A Chinese letter was waiting for me here saying how Cecil was honoured in the hearts of our Chinese brethren. 'His earnestness, simplicity, diligence, and skill, led them to mourn for him with unusual sorrow. His good name is spread in and out of the Church, and, though young, he has accomplished much.' This is written by one of my own students who is now an able Evangelist in Sianfu. How great your thankfulness must be that Cecil has left such a record behind, to establish faith in the work and message of the missionary in years to come! How I miss Cecil's word of welcome even now! How different the place will be! But is he not continuing his heavenly service, amid conditions which are infinitely better? 'His servants shall serve Him.'"

From *Dr. Harold Balme, Tsinanfu*: "I feel that

The Triumphant End.

I must add a line to the very many that you will be receiving at this time, to express to you my deepest sympathy in this crushing blow. As one who knew Cecil in his student days, and has followed him with the keenest interest and highest admiration, the news is simply tragic, and now this morning comes the tidings that dear Stanley Jenkins has passed away also. Words just fail at times like this, and one just bows one's head before Perfect Wisdom and Perfect Love, knowing that He doeth all things well, and that He loves the work in Sianfu as none of us can do. It was but the other day that I was speaking of Jenkins and Cecil in connection with the possibility of either of them being appointed here. This was before my appointment was settled. I was urging with all my strength that either Jenkins or Cecil should be transferred, on the ground that in my opinion these two men stood shoulders above every single one of us in the B.M.S. medical work in China. But the answer which came, which I felt was incontrovertible, was that they were both absolutely indispensable in Shensi, and now the Lord has called both away. How utterly strange it does seem to our poor finite minds, and yet He will not forsake Shensi or allow her to suffer. The memory of your son, and the knowledge of his lovely work at Sianfu, will be a very precious thing. Everybody loved him, and everybody spoke highly of his character and influence. May God raise up many like him, called forth by the story of that life which he was so ready to lay down a year ago, and which he has now yielded up! I cannot think of Cecil

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

Robertson without being reminded of Cecil Schofield, the first medical missionary to Shansi. Both had a brilliant record at home; both spent just three years in the field; both were carried off by typhus; both laid wonderful foundations for the Kingdom of God. Others will enter into their labours, and their work shall follow them."

From *Dr. Lewis (a fellow-student), T'aiyüanfu* : " I must write to tell you how deeply I sympathize with you in the terrible blow which has recently come upon you. Cecil's death has been a real personal sorrow to me, for I valued his friendship highly, knowing him to be a really good man in the highest sense of the word. It is hard to realize that his work on earth is completed. But though his term of office has been a short one, it has been a glorious one. We were very proud of his splendid work during the Revolution, and I am thoroughly convinced that, though he himself has been taken, the influence of what he has done still abides, and Sianfu is nearer to Christ because your son lived there. More recently we have had news of the death of Dr. Jenkins, and all our hearts are filled with grief at this terrible and inscrutable Providence. In the presence of such a crushing blow as this one can only bow in wondering submission to the God Who overrules all, praying that He may comfort you and all others who are bereaved, and that this great loss may stimulate many more medicals to give their lives for China."

From the *Rev. Evan Morgan, Shanghai* : " Though I had not been in your son's company more than a

The Triumphant End.

few days altogether, I had conceived quite a personal affection for him. He was one of those charming men that you occasionally meet with in life. His gifts and personality had a great attraction and beauty. He had unique opportunities in China. He availed himself of them to the full, and few have done such a noble and efficient work as he managed to crowd into his short life of service here. Though short, his life has been most influential, and his work, I fear not to say, has been a great power for good and the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom."

Perhaps the most touching of all is the following letter from the Chinese "boy," so warmly referred to in a previous note of Dr. Robertson's diary:

"Peace! To begin with, I send my humble respects, because you asked Dr. Charter to bring from England a beautiful portrait of your son, Dr. Robertson. Dr. Charter has already bought glass and a frame for it, and I have respectfully received it. Many thanks, Mr. and Mrs. Robertson. I shall never forget your kindness. It has been brought over a thousand hills and ten thousand rivers, and has certainly become very precious to me. I humbly hang it in my home, and will never forget it.

"I worked for the [literally 'our'] Doctor. Who was to know that the Doctor would suddenly contract fever, and have the fever so severely? Although the fever was so dangerous, everyone hoped it would quickly depart. Suddenly in the spring, in the third month, the Lord called the Doctor

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu

home. As the world would say, it certainly was to be lamented, but if you examine the true meaning of it there is no cause for grief. His body for the time being has entered the ground, but his soul certainly has returned to heaven.

“ Only think of the time when the Doctor came to China to preach the Gospel—of the suffering he endured, travelling over the mountains and wading through the rivers, in order to cure diseases and help the ill of men. This he did for two reasons—firstly, because he was in sympathy with the love of the Saviour; and, secondly, because he had a heart of compassion for men. These two are one.

“ Again, when China was unexpectedly in the throes of the Revolution, and soldiers were wounded in the east and west parts of Shensi, he exerted his heart and strength, and spared no toil. The sound of the cannon reached to heaven, and frightened ten thousand people; but the Doctor was full of courage, from which it may be seen that he preserved the truth in his heart. The Doctor was keen on preaching the ‘ doctrine,’ and exerted his strength to the utmost in healing diseases. Since the time of his departure there is no one who does not praise his virtue and extol his beautiful life. Those who sorrow for him are not few; those who shed tears on his account are many. Again, these two are one. Now we must mutually trust each other to the grace and mercy of God, and think of the comfort of His truth. When the Lord leads us, no matter where or when, we will never depart from Him to the right hand or to the left.



TRANSLATION OF
DIPLOMA

THE LAND AND SEA FORCES

*Certificate of Decoration for Im-
portant Services to the State.*

*The President of the Republic, on
account of the diligent labours of the
English Pastor Robertson, of the "Sal-
vation of the World Hall" in Shensi,
orders the granting of the 5th Class of
the Order of the Tiger—Civil Division—
for Important Services to the State.*

*This Warrant is specially granted in
order to make this known, to stimulate
others and as proof.*

*(Signed) Tuan Chi-fui,
General Secretary
of the Land Forces.*

*The Republic of China,
13th day of the 2nd month
of the 2nd year.*

The Triumphant End.

“ Do not grieve overmuch. Please read Romans xv. 4 and 2 Cor. v. 8, and in general think rightly of this teaching, and we will mutually be comforted.

“ Now I am with Pastor Keyte as cook, and he also treats me well. Do not grieve because of the distance. This year my unworthy country is at rest, and the old capital (Sianfu) is peaceful. Even the harvest is good.

“ I only hope you will regard it as important to keep well. Now, because of a thousand hills and ten thousand rivers I cannot in person thank you, so I specially on this account use this inch of paper, in order to manifest that I sincerely wish to inform you with regard to this. My affection is great, but my paper is short, so I will say no more.

“ I respectfully wish you peace. I hope that all your honourable friends and relatives may receive happiness.

“ Your humble servant,

“ CHAO LIN,

“ Of the market town of Chao Tai, in the county of Lantien, in the Prefecture of Sian, in the Province of Shensi, personally addresses you.”

* * * * *

When the first tidings of Dr. Robertson's illness reached this country much prayer was offered on his behalf, that he might be spared. But it was otherwise ordered, and when we heard that he had passed home to God an inexpressible grief filled widespread circles of friends.

On the following Sunday morning we held our

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

memorial service at Regent's Park Chapel, at which his favourite hymns were sung, fervent prayers were offered for his sorrowing family, and, so well as we could, we recounted again the story of his noble life.

On April 19 an impressive service, presided over by Rev. J. H. French, was held in the Woodgrange Baptist Church by the pastors and members of the congregations who for five and a half years had so loyally supported Dr. Robertson by their prayers and gifts. An enlarged photograph, emblematically wreathed in laurels and ivy, recalled the beloved features, while the épergne of white lilies spoke of the purity of his life. Touching and beautiful tributes were paid by the Chairman, by Dr. Percy Lush, the Chairman of the Medical Auxiliary, who had known Dr. Robertson from his boyhood, and the Rev. C. E. Wilson, Foreign Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society. From the speech of the latter we quote the concluding paragraphs. After describing the scenes of the Revolution, he said:

“ I hasten to speak of the time when the acute trouble was abated, and when our missionaries who had bravely stayed all through the Revolution time needed relief. Remember their names! Cherish them in your hearts! Thank God for them! Tell your children of them! Let the story of their heroism be among your household memories: Mr. and Mrs. Shorrocks and their daughter Mary; Dr. Andrew Young and this doctor's wife and their little child; and Cecil Robertson—with no other

The Triumphant End.

Europeans. All through those long, trying weeks they toiled on, having to go long periods without news from home, knowing that their friends were anxious about them and wondering if they still survived. After that time relief forces went out, and it was necessary that some should go away on holiday. Mr. and Mrs. Shorrocks had to come home, with Dr. and Mrs. Young; but Dr. Robertson determined that nothing more was necessary than that he should take a brief holiday at the coast, or perhaps a journey to Japan. The people and officials, however, would not let them leave the city without a great ovation. They presented them with memorials and decorated them with tokens of love and esteem, paid their travelling expenses to the coast, sent military escorts with them far out of the city to show them honour; and when, his holiday over, Robertson returned, it was to a city that already loved him and looked upon him as a great benefactor.

“ Dr. Stanley Jenkins soon went back to China. The country was still disturbed, and the city far from fit for ladies to dwell in, and Dr. Jenkins left his wife and two children at the coast while he hurried inland. He took out with him from England the approved project for the new hospital. He was full of enthusiasm for the carrying of this to a successful and speedy issue, in order to replace the old and dilapidated premises then in use.

“ Then came typhus. It is little wonder that the dread disease should work such havoc in the city. At the time of the massacre of the Manchus they filled the wells with corpses. Frightened men and

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

women, in dread of the soldiery, committed suicide by jumping into them. What wonder that the springs were poisoned, or that the dreaded typhus struck its roots into the overcrowded population! The young doctor, who had taken his short holiday with the full hope of returning fresh and strong for his winter's work, was one of the first victims. The Chinese doctor also fell a victim, then Dr. Jenkins; and the new recruit, Dr. Thomas Scollay, who had but just come into the country, had his three colleagues all down together, he alone being able to help. And then Robertson died.

“What are we to say to all these things? I will not deny here in your presence, my friends, that when the news came of the death of Robertson, and later of Jenkins, my friend Dr. Moorshead and I knelt side by side in my office in an agony of sorrow. It seemed so wonderful. God tried our faith, but we are here to-night, not mourning, but to triumph. It is an hour of victory. We thank God for a life—for two lives—so pure, so noble. They have conquered death. Robertson would not have deplored his death. Are we not servants of Him who gave as His great ideal of life: ‘Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many’? That is the Christian's motto. We are not going to count our lives by years, by attainments, by money laid up, by treasure in the home; our lives are measured by the way we fulfil that motto: ‘Not to be ministered unto, but to minister,’ and to give our lives, even after the pattern of His ransom.

The Triumphant End.

“ What are we seeing as a result of their labours in Sianfu ? The very atmosphere of the city is changed as regards religion. The Governors are thinking of advancing the Christian Church. That is surely the result of God’s work among them. We are embarrassed by the eagerness of the Chinese to understand and grasp Christianity. They say that without a revival of the moral and spiritual life of the country they cannot fulfil the ideals just coming into their hearts and lives, so they want to establish Christianity. Was there ever anything more pathetic than the announcement in yesterday’s paper that the new Chinese Cabinet have sent out from Peking to every part of that great Republic, to the magistrates of every city, an announcement in the following significant words: ‘ If there be a band of Christians in your city, tell them that we want them to pray for China. If there be a mission-hall anywhere in your district, send a message for next Sabbath, April 27, asking the people to pray for the Republic of China. Let them pray that virtuous men may be appointed to office, and peace established in our midst, and that the Government may be true.’

“ The labour of these two noble men is not in vain. God is unfolding a great plan. With tears we look on the memorials of our friends, but we know that their lives are now reaching their fruition. Oh that our lives may resemble theirs ! Here is the call of a noble example, and what is so well worth living for ?

“ Dr. Robertson was a gifted doctor and a skilled surgeon. During the dreadful days of revolution

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

his only medical colleague had appendicitis, and his life was in danger. Robertson, however, operated successfully on him and saved his life. But what we remember to-day, and what we hear from China, is not so much about his skill, but about his beautiful life, his courtesy, his gentleness, his faith in Jesus, his spirituality. Though we cannot all be surgeons and have his gifts and attainments, we can all aim at being known as God's servants, and as being without blame before Him in love."

The Pastor, officers, and friends at Regent's Park Chapel are inserting a brass tablet in the vestibule of the Chapel, with the following inscription:

IN
LOVING MEMORY
OF
CECIL F. ROBERTSON,
M.B., F.R.C.S.
MEDICAL MISSIONARY OF THE B.M.S.,
WHO, AFTER PASSING THROUGH
THE GREAT REVOLUTION, 1911-1912,
DIED OF TYPHUS FEVER
AT HIS POST,
SIANFU, SHENSI, IN CHINA,
ON MARCH 16TH, 1913,
AGED 28.

* * * * *

Such are the records, so far as human love can limn them, of a rare and beautiful character—one of God's great gifts to all of us who knew him. He adorned the Gospel of his God and Saviour, and

The Triumphant End.

made it fragrant and attractive to those who saw it embodied in the life of their benefactor; and it will take more than one generation before all the harvest will be gathered in, which has resulted from his sowing.

The Churches in East London are giving a practical evidence of their affectionate appreciation of Dr. Robertson's life-work by contributing towards the Jenkins-Robertson wing of the new Sianfu Hospital, and it is quite possible that some readers of these memorials may like to help in the same direction. But, after all, the best commemoration would be in the reader's affirmative response to the appealing summons which comes from the throne of our exalted Lord and the need of a perishing world—from the throne: "Who will go for us?" from the world: "Come over and help us!" What higher vocation is there among those which men gird themselves to follow? What nobler service could engage the energies of a brief mortal life? In what could young men better invest themselves than in the relief of human misery, whether of body or soul? What would give more zest to life, or more tranquillity in death? In all the earth there is no profession more noble, more interesting, more valuable to our human kind, or more pleasing to the Redeemer, than that to which Cecil Robertson gave himself; and in this, "he being dead, yet speaketh." If he were back again and could choose his life-work, with all the experience of the past to help him, do you suppose that he would not choose again to be a medical missionary?

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

The ranks of this noble order of Christian service have been sorely depleted in recent years, and recruits are not so plentiful as once. But surely this can be only a temporary arrest. More than a passing phase it must not, cannot be. And that the vacant places may be refilled, let each young Christian, after reading these memorials, look straight into the face of Christ, saying: "If Thou needest me out yonder in the dark, bid me come unto Thee."

The life of Cecil Robertson appeals for volunteers, mustering silently as the dew-drops which alight so gently on the summer lawns, clad in the beauty of holiness, and deft at dealing with the diseases of soul or body. Thus will the Master's footprints on our world's surface be kept fresh, for He went about doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people; and He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. "Who, then, will be baptized for the dead?"

"Awake! why linger in the gorgeous town,
Sworn liegemen of the Cross and thorny crown?
Up from your beds of sloth for shame,
Speed to the eastern mount like flame;
Nor wonder, should ye find your King in tears,
Even with the loud hosanna ringing in His ears."

APPENDIX

CECIL ROBERTSON'S OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS JOURNEY FROM SIANFU TO YENANFU, AND ALSO A SHORT RECORD OF HIS WORK THERE

I MUST start from the beginning and give you as good a picture as I can of my journey and experiences.

I had some things of my own as well as drugs for myself to use at Yenanku, also for Mr. Watson at Suitechou, so that it was necessary to hire three animals—one a full load; one half a load, on the top of which my boy, Ch'ü Stu, our cook, sails; and one for the teacher who is accompanying me. These three went to San Yuan on Saturday, as that is the direct road to this place. I, however, went to Fu Yin Ts'un, as I was anxious to see the Bells, who are leaving shortly for England.

Our native cook went with me to show me the way. About five miles from Fu Yin, Bell and Jenkins, who are staying there, met us on their horses, and we all rode along together, reaching there about dark.

I had a very pleasant Sunday at Fu Yin Ts'un. I took the service there in the afternoon. It was a little formidable, for they have a somewhat high pulpit. However, I got through with it, though not so well as I should have liked.

To-day I left there about 9.30, Mrs. Bell having first fitted me up with necessaries. Mr. Bell sent his stable-

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

boy with me on his own horse for about half the way, for which I was very glad, as otherwise it would have been difficult to find the way. He left me a little after midday, and I went on alone to a small place where I got a meal and had my horse fed. The folk there seemed extremely interested in all my belongings, especially because I could understand what they said; and, what served to surprise them more, they could understand what I said. The source of the greatest wonder was my thermos flask.

That place was eight or nine miles from here, so it did not take a great while to get here, but unfortunately it snowed during the latter half of the day. I am staying here at the little mission station, where there is an evangelist, a young fellow who was in the school a few years ago. He seemed a bright young fellow, but it is not at all an unfit building as native buildings go. They have about forty attendants, including members and scholars.

Tuesday, February 21, Pai Tung Quan.—As I told you yesterday, it snowed, and kept on for the whole afternoon and through the night. At first it was decided that we should stay there for the day, but later the muleteer discovered that there was another party going, consisting of a pack mule and a mule litter, so he thought he would go too. I could have wished the roads had been better for the sake of my little horse, who is not quite strong enough for a long journey yet. As for myself, I was well fortified against weather of all sorts with a skin gown, mackintosh, Wellington boots, and a wind-cap. After a little the sun came out, and I was very glad of some black glasses, for the brilliance of the snow was rather trying. For most of the way we travelled along the bank of a river, now by its side, now on the side of the hill, and constantly crossing and re-

Appendix.

crossing. There is something fascinating about the slow dawdle of a mule caravan, the tinkle of the bells, the whirrup of the muleteers, and the hill scenery. The man in the mule litter is a sort of minor official, who is going to Chung Pu to take up duties there at the Yamen. We have just exchanged courtesies, that is all at present—he is a Hupeh man, and his talk a little difficult to follow. This town is of a fair size; it has a little mission station, with an evangelist. There are only two members, and a weekly attendance at Sunday services of eight or nine. That is enough to take the grit out of a man who has not the real thing in him, is it not? It brings home to one the difficulty of these isolated places. We ought constantly to remember such in prayer. We think much of the big things—the schools, the hospitals, and the large agencies at work—these appeal to us; but we tend to forget these isolated workers, who are labouring faithfully under great difficulties; but they are sowing the seeds of a Church that will be strong some day.

February 22, Ni Chun.—Here I am at the next stage of my journey. We started soon after it was light, but did not arrive till it was just dark, after a fairly cold journey. We have been passing through hilly country again to-day.

February 24, Chung Pu.—You will remember that I told you there was a minor official travelling with us. On Wednesday evening he came into my room at the inn and had a chat with me. Like them all, he wanted to see all my things, and to know the price of everything. He also had his food with me. A little later Ch'ü Stu came in and wanted to know if I was going to have prayers—I have prayers every evening with the teacher and my boy Ch'ü Stu. I said, "Yes, presently," so my guest after a little retired, and I started to write this

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

letter. Then the teacher came in, and said that my guest would like to join us at prayers, for which I was very glad; and the four of us had prayers together. I read a portion of John xiv., explaining it briefly, and then we stood and I led in prayer. He afterwards had a look at the Bible, and I promised to send him one. I wonder how he was impressed with it all. It was then getting rather late, and so I retired.

Next day, yesterday, we started off again. I went on ahead, as there is a mission station here, and I wanted to get a talk with the evangelist. The road in many places went through deep gullies, and in other places along ridges with a sheer drop on either side of one to two hundred feet, and in one place not more than room for the horse to go along. However, my little nag did not let me down once. When I got here I came along to the little mission station, and received a very warm welcome. They wanted me to stay there, and I submitted to their entreaties. It is rather a novel experience, because last night I slept on the same kang (bed) with the evangelist, and am living to-day with him in his room. Yesterday evening some of the Church members came to prayers, which I conducted. This morning, hearing a doctor was here, a number of people came to be treated, but, alas! I had no drugs. They were all packed away; so I had to tell them I had no medicine prepared, as I had not expected to stay here. Our friend the official has just been up to call. It must have been at some personal inconvenience, as this is the first day he has been here, and it showed his interest. I am going to send him a Bible when I get to Yen-anfu, and shall probably call on him on my way back.

Saturday, February 25, Lo Ch'üan.—We decided to start quite early this morning—at daybreak—and so get the

Appendix.

advantage of the hard frozen roads before the sun began to melt them, reducing all to mud. The evangelist got up quite early, while it was yet dark, and awakened Ch'ü Stü, who came into the room we were sleeping in and started to get breakfast ready. The evangelist, Mr. Hsu, in the meanwhile returned to his kang to finish off his sleep. I, however, proceeded to get up and have my breakfast. When everything was packed up it was still dark. Our good friend the evangelist had awakened us too early, and, like the Apostle of old, I wished for dawn. The evangelist was sleeping away comfortably while I was trying to make myself happy for about an hour opposite an apology of a charcoal fire. However, "all's well that ends well," and it enabled Ch'ü Stü to go and arouse the muleteer and get him along to the little mission station by daybreak; so that we were able to get one-third of the way here before the sun became powerful enough to change the hard earth into soft mud and the ice and snow into delicious brooks that gurgled down all the hills and along all the roads in a delightful fashion.

Travelling is one occasion when Chinese dress is a distinct disadvantage, and one cannot help wishing for the breeches and gaiters of the Western dress. We have continued all day passing through very hilly country, and it was really beautiful this morning with the early sun on the hills and our road lying along a little stream; but when the difficulties underfoot arose it made the beauties tend to disappear. We got here about 4.30 to 5 o'clock. Unfortunately I have no watch at present, and have to depend on the sun; and when you have had nothing more than a snack since five o'clock in the morning you feel ravenously hungry. A couple of bowls of "meru"—that is, strips of dough boiled together with

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

bran curd and pieces of fat pork—were followed by toasted Chinese bread and marmalade, and accompanied by I won't say how many cups of tea. Does not this sound sumptuous? But you do not need anything special to tempt your appetite under these circumstances, and I have thoroughly enjoyed it, and feel another man. This cook of ours is really excellent along the road; he seems to have got a fixed idea that there are three things I require directly I get to an inn, viz., hot water for washing, a pot of tea, and a charcoal fire, all of which are usually ready in ten minutes.

This inn seems all right to stay at for the Sunday (to-morrow), but just now there is one of those bands of which I have told you working away pretty hard not far off!

Monday.—To-day we started at daybreak again. We had to go up and down some very steep hills, and when you take up half a pound of mud with your boot at each step you can understand it is pretty difficult. The latter part of the day the roads were distinctly better, and I hope that means the same for to-morrow. This place, Fu Chou, where we arrived about 6 p.m., is tucked away at the foot of some hills; in fact, surrounded by hills, on one side quite close, and on the other three sides at a little distance. A fairly wide river passes round these three sides. I met the evangelist here, and he tells me there are many people coming in to Yen-anfu to break off their opium while I am there. That is two days' journey away. It is really in some cases the only thing that prevents them joining the Church.

This is the last day we rest at an inn, for to-morrow we reach Yen-anfu. We had a somewhat exciting incident this morning, and one which might have ended

Appendix.

disastrously. We were going along a portion of the road which had a high bank on the inner side and on the outer side a drop of about 30 feet—certainly not less. Along the outer side the muleteer was walking; we three were riding at a walking pace. Suddenly a piece of the turf gave way, and the muleteer would have fallen down the 30 feet had he not just managed to catch hold of the edge with both his hands. We three at once jumped off, and Ch'ü Stu and the teacher pulled him up. Had he fallen right down he would certainly have suffered serious injury, which would have been a great misfortune for himself and awkward for us from many points of view. A little farther on we met Mr. Shorrock, on his way back. Had we not been delayed a day, we should have met here and spent the night together, which I wish very much we had been able to do. As it was, we did not spend more than ten minutes together, as it is a long road, and we could not delay. He seems to have enjoyed his trip very much. It was pleasant to meet on the road like that, miles away from any other foreigner. Then he went on his way, and I on mine, and by now thirty miles will be separating us.

March 2, Yenansfu.—Yesterday I left Kan Ch'uan at daybreak and came on ahead on my horse, so that I got here about two o'clock in the afternoon. The road was good the whole distance, and there were no hills worth speaking of. It was a good deal prettier than the other road, as it ran along a valley practically the whole way. There were more trees about, and the road and general surroundings were more like England, and the road was good for travelling. It would have been possible to ride a bicycle most of the way. Mr. and Mrs. Borst Smith had not expected me quite so early, but as I was passing

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

the street preaching-shop Mr. Smith happened to be there, so he came out and took me along to his house.

They were glad to see me, and seemed grateful that I had come. Though the premises are small, they are quite comfortable. There are two courtyards with rooms on each of three sides, and in addition a courtyard devoted to a small girls' school of about eight or nine. At a little distance off, about a stone's throw, is the little chapel, with Mr. Shields' rooms and a school for small boys of about eight or nine. On the big street there is a preaching hall. The city itself, though a "fu" city, is really quite small. On the north and west sides are hills fairly steep, at the foot of which the city lies, and on the south and east sides a river flows round the walls. The two sides face two valleys, separated by a hill on which is a pagoda or temple. These two valleys contain the main roads; on the one hand from the south and on the other toward the north. The north here seems to have got a good start. But more of that in future letters.

March 9, Yenanfu.—At the services here there is quite a nice little audience of about twenty to thirty, and, if evangelists and colporteurs are included, sixteen communicants. I took the service on Sunday afternoon, and delivered my one sermon for the third time. We have got two women and two men opium patients just now, besides the folks who come here twice a week, for any ills they may have, to see me. In addition occasionally I go out to see patients, so there is quite a deal to do in addition to my study. I have been with Mr. Smith to-day to pay my respects to the two highest officials in the city. It is the first time I have paid an official visit, and I rather enjoyed it. We hired a couple of chairs and went to the Yamen. On arrival we went inside the gate to an inner courtyard, while Mr. Smith's servant had

Appendix.

meanwhile gone on ahead with our cards to warn the official of our arrival. Presently we were invited to go farther, the central gates being opened, and we passed through in our chairs, which we then left, and following a man, who held up our cards, passed into the guest-room, the official having first come out to meet us. Inside the guest-room we first made the usual greeting, which corresponds with the shaking of hands. Then the official, taking a cup of tea from a table, carried it up to the chief seat, which was for me, as I was the chief guest. We went through the usual form of etiquette, I saying, "I am unworthy," he saying, "It is only what ought to be." Mr. Smith had the next highest seat, and the host took a lower seat. We then had more conversation, in which I did not take much part, but in which there were plenty of compliments flying about, such as "It is impossible for us to exhaust our gratitude to you for coming to our mean country." To which the reply is, "I am unworthy"; or, "How dare I?" or anything else of a humble nature. On referring to our speaking, he would say, "You speak extremely well; I am much impressed by it"; to which we reply, "You are too complimentary. My knowledge is only a rough general acquaintance with the language; I don't pretend to have mastered it," and so on. Then when our business is ended he invites us to drink tea. This is the signal for us to depart. While we have been talking there are a number of servants waiting outside, and the moment they see the sign of drinking tea there is a bustle and stir to get doors open and the chairs ready for our departure. We rise from our seats and go to the door; he comes too, but we beseech him not to escort us out, but to "restrain his footsteps." However, of course he accompanies us out to our chairs. A final bow is made,

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

and we go off, he having first said that he would come and repay the visit. So they will be coming here in a day or two. There was really more than this, but it is all very interesting, and it seems to work like clockwork. At a small place like this the foreigners get much more intimate with the officials than at a large place like Sianfu. They all seem very cordial and friendly, and some are really quite intimate.

March 12.—Since I commenced my letter we have had the return call of the Sub-prefect, but it did not seem at all a formal affair, for Mr. Smith had his guests in the sitting-room and gave them foreign tea. The Sub-prefect stayed quite a long time, asking me about an affliction his wife suffers from. How convenient it would be to have a lady doctor for a wife!

Yesterday the secretary of the Prefect came to consult me about a trouble of his. He used to be at Han Chungfu, and has acted as a teacher to several of the C.I.M. missionaries, though he has a much better post now. It seems, therefore, as if I might get quite a number of official patients while I am here. I have been attending a man who I believe is now dead. They first called me to see him when he was practically dying. When I got there they were burning incense and tinkling a bell, to send away the "vicious breath" of which he was supposed to be a victim. The room was only small, and at one end was the kang on which the man was propped in a half-sitting posture. There were also on the kang several men, women, and children. Every now and then they would give him a shake and call his name to try to wake him up, for he was unconscious. In the room I counted altogether twenty-one other people, relatives. They besought me if I could to save his life. "Use any method, and if he

Appendix.

dies we shall not blame you." I did what I could, though I told them I feared he would die. He improved slightly, which raised their hopes, but he must have died in the night, as they have not been to-day. I saw they had got all his best clothes ready to put on him before he died, in accordance with their custom. They do not seem to have the slightest idea how to attend to the sick. What a contrast a sick-room in China and a sick-room at home!

I am going to have prayers with the servants, teachers, helpers, and scholars once a week, and to take the service this day fortnight in the afternoon.

The opium patients are gradually progressing, and several of them will be leaving this week. I wonder how much they have learned of the doctrine and what sort of impression they have gained. They have been studying a little catechism with the teacher who lives on the same premises with them. I was talking with the teacher this week. We had been reading the Sermon on the Mount, and he said to me, "I think if Confucius had lived in the same time and in the same country as Jesus Christ they would have had a great many things to talk about together." As you see, he puts Confucius on a level with Christ, but it was not an irreverent remark to make. I wonder when he will learn to put Jesus on a higher level! Later he said in a half-tentative way, "There are many Christians who are not like this," referring to the Sermon on the Mount, a conclusion, I fear, that too many have had to come to, both in this and in other lands. How one longs for something of the fragrance and of the radiance of Jesus Christ! I am more and more convinced of the importance of the daily life, a factor that is of far, far more value than the power to speak or preach.

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

March 31.—I have heard a piece of news. Dr. and Mrs. Jenkins are going home directly I get down from here. We had letters yesterday. I do not yet know the details. This will make a great deal of difference to me, for it will mean that I shall be thrown into full work and responsibility at once, sharing the work with Dr. Charter. It will be no easy place for me to fill in my present stage. The greater part of the hospital management will fall on me. It will require all the diligence and application I am capable of, especially if I am to get a little language study and evangelistic work in.

I want to tell you just one or two of the special things to pray for. One is from my own inner life. It is so terribly easy to let things which seem of pressing importance break in upon the time which ought to be regarded as the most important and valuable of the day, and time which, rightly used, is the only certain source of steady-ing and staying power, amid the multitude of duties that arise during the day. The second is in the control and management of the many Chinese servants and helpers that are associated with a hospital. This is an aspect of the work that is not thought so much of at home, but which provides an endless cause of petty difficulties and worries, specially to the new man. The third is that I may be able to carry on efficiently the work that Dr. Jenkins has done, and in something of the same spirit, for I have never seen him angry or cross or really irritable, despite the numberless little difficulties and interruptions which constantly arise. There are other things which will require all the grace and tact that may be bestowed on me.

April 6.—I am contemplating leaving here next Friday, and getting to Sianfu on April 22. I took the service here on Sunday morning, and got on moderately well; but I

Appendix.

find it rather an effort to prepare sermons in Chinese. I have been visiting several cases, one a young man with pneumonia, who I hope is going to get better. There is a great deal that would be very attractive about permanent medical work here. The doctor would soon get to know personally a large number of people, and would be known by all. He would have officials among his patients, and would keep in closer touch with all classes of patients than is possible in a big city. This would have great advantages both from a medical and from a missionary point of view. I think I told you I have been attending the military official's wife. The second time I went he had heard I had a camera, and was anxious to have his photograph taken. I went along later and took quite a number of photographs of himself, his wife, his little boy, and his bodyguard. He is sending his little boy to our mission school, and wants him to learn Christianity. He has been a good friend to the mission, and gave a feast specially in my honour, treating me as the chief guest. Mr. Smith and Mr. Shields were also present, and the magistrate whose visit I told you about; also two or three secretaries from the various Yamens. The custom at these feasts is to take a mouthful or two, and then put your chopsticks down and chat a bit; but they were all very friendly, and there was not much ceremony.

The next day Mr. Smith had the military official Reu and the magistrate Peng to dinner, to English food. They seemed to enjoy all, specially the soup. By the kindness of Reu I have been able to do two days' journey in one day. I sent my boy and teacher on the day before I started with mules and luggage and my horse. They left my horse at the first stage, and went on the next day, while I started that day from Yen-an on a horse that Reu

Cecil Robertson of Sianfu.

lent me, accompanied by his special servant, who is on his way also to Sian. It was a lovely horse, and we reached the first stage by 11.30, having started at 5.15 a.m. There was a meal waiting for me, since he had sent a man the day before to instruct his soldiers to prepare a meal for me, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I afterwards went on my own horse to the end of the second stage.

I was quite busy with patients the last day or two. The opium patients and one or two others wanted to show their appreciation of what I had done, and so approached me through a middle man to know whether I would receive a tablet—the tablet being usually in these cases a piece of wood with characters carved on and all painted to extol the virtues of the recipient. I acquiesced, and, guided by the evangelist, they chose four excellent characters, the meaning of which is, "To succour the world his heart labours." All the names of the subscribers were also engraved on it, and it was hung up in the presence of all the givers and ourselves to the accompaniment of the letting off of crackers.

Afterwards they all came in to drink tea, and I made a little speech, and the evangelist led in prayer. There is one thing about this for which I am glad: since their names are all on the board they are not likely to go back and take to opium again, for it would be such a loss of "face"—the one thing the Chinaman abhors above all else; but I sincerely hope some of these men will later learn the truth, and become real disciples of our Master.

I got back to Sianfu Friday, April 21. Dr. and Mrs. Jenkins will be leaving on May 5—all being well.