

SOPHIA COOKE ;

OR,

FORTY-TWO YEARS' WORK IN SINGAPORE

NOTE.

Any profits arising from the sale of this Memoir, written at the request of the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, will be given to that Society.



SOPHIA COOKE.

Frontispiece.

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Forty-two Years' Work in Singapore.

BY

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'OLD ENGLAND,' 'MEMOIR OF W. FARLIE CLARKE,' ETC.



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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. EARLY YEARS	I
II. MISS GRANT AND EARLY MALAY MISSIONS	6
III. THE FIRST TEN YEARS: 1853—1863	28
IV. PROGRESS: 1863—1875	41
V. MISSION WORK IN CHINA	52
VI. LAST YEARS	66
VII. REMINISCENCES	81
POSTSCRIPT	90

INTRODUCTION

BY THE REV. B. BARING-GOULD, M.A.

MY only claim to be allowed the privilege of introducing to the reader the accompanying little volume arises from the fact that I happen to be one of the last who, as an official of a missionary society, saw the subject of these memoirs in the midst of her beloved children and work.

Deeply conscious from somewhat extensive personal observation of the debt of gratitude which the Church Missionary Society owes to the workers connected with the Female Education Society, most gladly do I respond to the request which has been made to me.

The name of Miss Cooke, it need scarcely be said, has been for many years a household word among all who possessed an intelligent knowledge of Christian work, specially in South China and in the Malay Peninsula. Hence it was in full accordance with the fitness of things that, on paying a brief visit to Fuhkien in December of 1894, again and again did we come across in the wives of Christian native workers the most cheering fruit of the labour expended by Miss Cooke and her colleagues in her boarding-school at Singapore. Well do I recall in one particular case the wife of a native pastor who had

thus been trained. Subsequently she had, with her husband, volunteered for missionary work in the Corea, and after a few years there of excellent service we found her once more engaged actively and successfully among her own people ; her children, too, all young, and one quite of a tender age, had caught the blessed enthusiasm of the mother, and to the utmost of their powers were working for Christ.

We were thus in a measure prepared for what we saw in a passing visit to her school, when *en route* for Ceylon. Greatly was I struck with the brightness of the children, the practical nature of the teaching and training which they received, and especially with their remarkable and accurate knowledge of leading passages of God's Word in the English tongue. There is no need to chronicle the charm of the hostess, and her intimate acquaintance with, and sympathy for, the work of individual missionaries in all parts of the East connected with different Christian communions. These things are proverbial. Truly, the story of the life of Miss Cooke is a splendid testimony to the results of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. After a prolonged period of unselfish, large-hearted, and devoted service, rich in fruit which will abide in many a house, wellnigh in every region where Christian Chinese women are to be found, she has fallen 'asleep in Jesus.'

Of her it may assuredly be declared that she is one of 'the blessed dead,' and her 'works do follow her.' May God raise up many more such to His own praise !

B. BARING-GOULD.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

'Christ Jesus loved me, and gave Himself for me.'—GAL. ii. 21.

'Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.'
I. WATTS.

CHRISTIAN biography is always a fascinating study. To trace the varied ways by which our heavenly Father leads His sons and daughters to glory; to observe in each case the joys and sorrows, the lights and shadows, the difficulties, the trials, the anxieties, the manifold vicissitudes which are all implements in the Divine hand to shape and perfect the Christian for his eternal home, must ever be a deeply interesting and profitable occupation. But often besides the charm of noticing the gradual growth of grace in the individual, the shining light shining more and more unto the perfect day, there is blended with this the record of some valuable work for God committed to His servant's care. This is eminently the case with regard to the subject of this memoir, Sophia Cooke of Singapore. She must ever be chiefly remembered 'by what she has done.' We know little of her early life, save that she was born at Hilborough, in Norfolk, on February 27, probably in the year 1814, and was sent as a girl to a school in Bury St. Edmunds. Here she received an excellent education according to

the fashion of those days. She learnt music, and French, and Latin. Without being in the least a genius, she had good abilities, and profited well by these advantages. This was, in fact, specially desirable, as she had before her the prospect of becoming a governess. Accordingly, in due time she left school, and entered her first situation, which happened to be in the household of a Suffolk farmer. Those were the palmy days of agriculture in England, and much quiet happiness was enjoyed in the comfortable old farmhouses, with their trim gardens, gay with roses, hollyhocks, or dahlias, while the farmer could look at his broad fields of corn and his great chestnut horses without any misgivings as to the future.

For about twenty years Miss Cooke continued to be a governess, and probably little dreamt of any great change or variety in her life. But though she knew it not, doubtless these quiet years were a good preparatory discipline for the unknown future. Hers was a strong nature, one of warm feelings and determined will. To learn patience, humility, self-denial, self-control, perhaps there could have been no better training for her than in the quiet career of a governess. We know not when the germs of spiritual life were developed in her, but in some of her later situations we find that she was valued for the religious teaching she gave. One of her pupils, daughter of a venerable clergyman, writes : ' To her faithful teaching, in addition to that of my dear father, I owe my early knowledge of the Scriptures and of the Gospel plan.' She was in another happy Christian home when her call to personal missionary work came. She had already taken a deep interest in missions, and in the family of Archdeacon Hone ' she stirred up an interest in them amongst his girls, so that a different missionary field was taken up, read, prayed, and talked about each Sunday.'

Here is a pleasant reminiscence of her, by one of these early pupils of hers, retained fresh after the lapse of so many years: 'She was with us as a governess when I was only from ten to twelve years of age; but I think of her as an enthusiastic teacher, giving a charm for us to books which we found other children considered dull, and she led us to make it a very real thing to strive to do our lessons, and all things, "to the glory of God." Our early interest in missionary work, instilled by our dear parents, was fostered and enlarged by her. I cannot remember, if I knew, the steps which led to her going to Singapore; but in the midst of the sorrow of parting with her, she made us look upon it as a privilege and honour to be sending forth a missionary from our home.'

Another early friend* furnishes us with the simple and interesting little details of the steps which led to her offering herself for a missionary.

While Miss Cooke was governess in the family of Archdeacon Hone, the Rev. G. T. W. Hough came there to preach for the Church Missionary Society. She was deeply interested by his sermon, so much so that, no doubt with her consent, the Archdeacon told the preacher that she had long been dreaming of missionary work, but knew not whom to consult about it. It was then arranged that she should accompany Mr. Hough in his drive to another place where he had to address a C.M.S. meeting. The result of the long conversation held during this drive was that she at once decided to become a missionary, and began without any delay to prepare herself for the work, Mr. Hough giving her the address of Miss Webb, Secretary of the Society for Promoting Female Education in India and the East, as the right person to whom she should apply.

* Miss Hough, sister of the Rev. G. T. W. Hough.

Soon afterwards Sophia Cooke went to London, and offered herself to this Society. By its rules each candidate for employment is interviewed by three ladies of the committee, upon whose report the decision whether to accept her offer of service or not greatly depends. One of those who then received Miss Cooke's application describes her thus at this important crisis of her life :* ' I perfectly remember the interview some forty-three years ago, but I cannot recall everything she said. The impassioned ardour with which she contemplated her prospective work was the thing which most impressed me, so much so as to create a passing misgiving lest a reaction should come with difficulties and disappointments. But I need not have feared. The strength and joy and confidence came from above.'

There was no such place as The Willows or Highbury House in those days, but the Society to which Miss Cooke had applied had struck out a method of their own for testing, and in some degree training, their candidates. They obtained the leave of the Home and Colonial School Society to send ladies about to undertake mission work to their institution, in which they could obtain ' practice in teaching under the superintendence and direction of qualified and experienced teachers.' The candidates usually remained there six months, and during this period their temper, ability, and general character would naturally show themselves. In consideration, however, of Miss Cooke's long experience in teaching, and of the high testimonials she brought from Mr. Lillingstone, Archdeacon Philpott, and Archdeacon Hone, she was required to remain only a much shorter time at the training school, and at once on leaving was accepted by the Com-

* Mrs. Luke, author of the children's hymn ' I think when I read that sweet story of old.'

mittee of the Society for Promoting Female Education in India and the East, and appointed to succeed Miss Grant as their agent in Singapore. On March 10, 1853, her farewell meeting with them took place, in which the Venerable Archdeacons Hone and Philpott, and the Rev. G. T. W. Hough, took part, and later in the same month she sailed for her far-away destined post.

CHAPTER II.

MISS GRANT AND EARLY MALAY MISSIONS: 1844—1854.

- ' A sorrowful cry through the air is ringing,
And over each heart its sadness is flinging,
And many a prayer that message is winging
Over the sea.
- ' Listen, oh, listen ! to us it is crying :
" Come over and help us, the lost and the dying."'
Through sunshine and storm to us it is flying
Over the sea.
- ' For a nation from death unto life is awaking,
And thousands their long-cherished idols forsaking,
And the dawn of the kingdom of Jesus is breaking
Over the sea.
- ' Oh, daughters of freedom ! no longer delaying,
But boldly and bravely your mission obeying,
Come, join us, and help those so earnestly praying
Over the sea.'

ALFRED WICKS.

IN order rightly to understand the work of Miss Cooke in Singapore, we ought to cast a glance at the early Malay missions of the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East. By the use of this last little word of four letters in its title the Society had laid claim for its sphere to vast countries hardly then open to missionaries. There is something splendid

in the courage of a few ladies meeting in London and embarking on so great an enterprise! Theirs was the simple courage of faith, and it has been amply rewarded, as faith always is. In India, in China, in Japan, in Persia, in Palestine, in West and South Africa, and in the islands of the Eastern seas, the Society has been the handmaid of many missions, and by means of its agents hundreds of children have been gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd.

The Malays, however little esteemed now, must originally have been a bold and enterprising race. They were the early masters of the Eastern seas, pushing their commerce and colonies far and wide. Sumatra was the early cradle of their race, and tradition lingered there of ancestors who survived the Deluge and disembarked there from the ark! Successive invasions of their lands by Hindoos and Mohammedans, both in Malacca and the islands, have broken down their ancient spirit, yet something of it lingered in those fierce Dyaks and 'wild robbers, or gypsies of the sea,' who gave Rajah Sarawak of Borneo so much trouble. English men-of-war at last put down these daring pirates, but not without considerable difficulty.*

* So late as 1867 an expedition against Malay pirates was fitted out, consisting of H.M.S. *Wasp* and *Satellite*. "These vessels, after punishing the principal villages, brought down three or four of the piratical leaders. The late Captain Edge, of H.M.S. *Satellite*, also brought down a little captive girl, who had evidently been taken by these people from one of the vessels they had destroyed. She was an Eurasian, and only about ten years of age, having in all probability been taken when quite an infant, for the language she spoke was very mixed, and she had no recollection of her capture. When received on board the vessel, she immediately became the pet of the sailors, and was treated with all the kindness for which the British Blue-jacket has made himself a worthy name, and was soon clothed in a dress made from navy serge, with a girl's hat of the latest fashion cleverly improvised out of a man-of-war's straw hat, and ornamented with a cock's feather for plume.

"On her arrival at Singapore she was first placed in the girls' school

The first missionaries sent out by the Ladies' Society were Miss Thornton and Miss Combe, who carried on a school for some time in Java, where they were charmed with the beauties of the scenery and touched by the degraded condition of the poor Malays. Amidst lofty mountains and woody valleys, the bamboo cottages peeped out, surrounded by tall cocoa-trees reflected in a glassy sea. The poor, dirty, half-naked Malays, with their basket-like hats and black teeth, looked weak and effeminate, particularly because they wore long hair and no beards, so that strangers at first took them for women. The Chinese appeared more respectable, their neat and often shining white dresses contrasting with their yellow skin. The houses of the Chinese were better built, and they exercised professions and trades, whereas the Malays were the coolies, or porters, of the land.

Borneo was the next Malay station occupied. The Dyaks, or chief tribe there resident, were described as very superstitious, honouring some supreme beings called *Jubata*. They considered themselves incapable of being taught anything, and often used an expressive word, *Bodika*, meaning, 'I am ignorant.' When some of them had been actually instructed a little by the missionary ladies, this word was not so often on their lips.

And now Singapore, so large and important an island, became the next sphere of interest. To the generosity of the ladies of Huddersfield, who guaranteed the Society £100 a year for ten years, was due the means to start

attached to Mr. Keasberry's mission, and upon its being closed was transferred by the Government to the Chinese girls' school, and baptized under the name of 'Mercy.' The poor child, however, did not long survive, but was one of the victims of cholera two years later. And here it would be unjust not to notice the great amount of good that has been done by the Society for Female Education in the East."

work there—a happy retrospect for them now! As often occurs when efforts are commenced with much zeal and interest, trials attended the early days of this venture. The first agents sent out were compelled by the illness of one of their number to return within a very short time. But after-experience often shows that little delays and limitations may be blessings in disguise. Just when this disappointment occurred, a lady offered herself to the Society whose high recommendations induced them at once to accept her, and who proved all they could desire.

Miss Grant, Miss Cooke's immediate predecessor, arrived in Singapore in 1843, having experienced on the way a terrible storm, in which she was brought very near eternity. In the hours of suspense passages of the Bible were her stay, and she wrote afterwards, 'My soul was filled with the thought that before night I might have seen my Saviour and entered everlasting rest. I never felt the promises of God more precious nor His presence more with me.' However, the storm abated, and the remainder of the voyage was less eventful. On June 2 the vessel touched at Cape Town, and on July 29 it dropped anchor at Singapore. 'When about eight miles off,' wrote Miss Grant, 'I saw the town lights peeping out here and there. I began to look with as fixed an eye as a miser looks on his gold. There was the land of my future life or death, where I hoped to gather many a stone for the temple of God!'

It was no uninviting view which met her gaze when morning dawned, for Singapore is a bright and picturesque island. Hundreds of vessels of various nationalities, from British men-of-war to Chinese junks and Malay *prahus*,*

* 'Boats sometimes from 80 to 100 feet long, the planks not fastened with rails, but laced together by rattans, and calked with bark which swells when wet.'—'Betel-nut Island,' by S. H. Bighton.

filled the harbour ; the delicate outlines of the volcanic hills, from 70 to 400 feet high, which form the core of the island, were pencilled clearly against the faultless blue sky ; Burket Tinih, the loftiest mountain, 519 feet high, rising, as if in guardianship of the town, immediately behind it. ' Owing to the moisture of the climate the island is clothed with luxurious and perpetual verdure in which cocoa-nut palms and ferns are conspicuous. At the mouths of the creeks are quaint dwellings of fishermen built of wood and palm leaf, and standing on poles over the water. In the smooth sandy bays cocoa-nut palms shelter picturesque Malay houses. More inland are groves of fruit-trees, patches of sugar-cane, Chinese gardens, tapioca and indigo fields, neat bungalows, the residences of officials, merchants, and rich merchants, diversify the scene. Coffee, pineapples, cocoa-nuts, and aloes are conspicuous objects of cultivation, and almost all fruits grow well here—oranges, custard-apples, pineapples, mangostine, and many others.'

Singapore is within one degree of the equator ; its usual temperature is from 70° to 90° Fahr. ; the nights are cool and refreshing. The north-east monsoons have mastery from November to May ; the southern, in May and June, are known as Java winds, and considered enervating. On an average there are 167 wet days in the year.*

No tale of war and bloodshed is connected with England's acquisition of this lovely island. Sir Stamford Raffles fixed on it as the site of the great commercial emporium which he determined to found for the encouragement of British trade in the East. In 1819

* The name Singapore is supposed to mean Lion City, but as there seems nothing, as at Sierra Leone, in the shape of the hills to suggest that name, the meaning suggested by Major McNair appears a more probable one, *i. e.*, a stopping-place or house of call.

permission was obtained to build a British factory, and in 1824 it was purchased from the Sultan of Johore for £13,500.

Here, then, Miss Grant found her new home, in which she happily and perseveringly laboured for ten years. Immediately on landing she was put in charge of a school for girls with twenty pupils, established by Mrs. Dyer, of the London Missionary Society. As they mostly spoke English, she was able to commence lessons with them at once.

The Chinese generally set little value on girls, and female infanticide is by no means uncommon in China.* Ask a Chinese how many children he has, and he will tell you the number only of his boys. The girls are not considered worth reckoning! No marvel, therefore, that to educate them is considered ridiculous.

The children in charge of whom Miss Grant now found herself were mostly those whose Chinese fathers had married Malay women. She soon became attached to them, and thought them by no means inferior to the generality of children in England. Her love of them increased as time went on, and she wrote home many an interesting account of them. 'They are a joy to me,' she said, 'and I do trust these flowers offered in the bud God will Himself accept as no mean sacrifice.'

Her work was not always without peril. She was sometimes in personal danger, and her Madras servant thought it necessary at times to sleep with his sword drawn at her bedroom door.

An artist loves his pictures, and an architect the buildings which he sees rising on the lines dictated by

* Near Amoy is a small pool known familiarly as Gui-a-ho, or the Babies' Pond. It is asserted that it is no uncommon thing to see the bodies of children that have been stealthily thrown in by their parents floating upon its green, slimy surface.

his genius. How much more must a Christian labourer love the living objects of his care!

Every little child must be an object of interest to those who have one in their charge. Even if dull and undemonstrative, we know each has to pass through joys and sorrows, to fight the hard fight with sin, to bear much, and at last to face death itself and an eternal world. How anxiously, how lovingly they need to be watched and taught and trained! We must not appeal too much to their emotions, or we may injure their health. We must not urge them to profession beyond their years, or we may foster self-deception. With tender skill we must lead them gently by the green pastures of God's Word, and habituate them to the sense of the love and goodness of God. At the same time, we must not forget to impress on them that merely saying 'I love Jesus' is little worth, for even a child is known by his *doings*, and to them, too, the Lord says in easily understood words, 'If ye love Me, keep My commandments.'

But while *all* children are interesting, some, from special gifts or more than usually individual characters, may naturally engross more attention than others. There were several amongst Miss Grant's pupils of whom this was the case, and as their names will frequently recur, and their histories be carried on in the life of Miss Cooke, we may well make their acquaintance while they were under her predecessor's care.

As much as possible, we will give the accounts of them in Miss Grant's own words.

THE STORY OF BEENEO.

Amongst Miss Grant's early pupils was a little girl called Beeneo. (The last syllable, 'neo,' is an affix dis-

tinctive of caste.) After attending the school some time she left it, apparently very ill, if not dying. Her father appeared to have a rooted aversion to Miss Grant, which, however, was happily not shared by the mother, who died not long afterwards. When she was buried, the heathen relatives marvelled why Beeneo would not burn gold paper for her, nor worship her spirit. After this event the poor child was sold for forty dollars to a heathen man, to be his wife. Miss Grant heard no further tidings of her for some months, but at last came in contact with her again, as described in the following remarkably graphic account :

'I know not whether you may be aware that secret societies, or brotherhoods, are extremely common amongst the Chinese, the bond of which, alas! appears to be nothing but iniquity; they take the most binding oaths never to betray or forsake each other, to help each other in every undertaking, bad as well as good, and this bond they seal by sipping each other's blood. Two of these brotherhoods, or *Huys* as they are termed (pronounced Who-ease), have lately had a violent quarrel, the one party acknowledging a black-faced, the other a red-faced idol; they have met in crowds of 6,000 at one time, and have proceeded to such lengths as will no doubt soon lead to the suppression of these disorders by the Government. You will not be surprised to find me acknowledging that I have felt at times a measure of trepidation on going alone at four o'clock in the morning into town to fetch my girls, also at visiting* them in the country; but hitherto, thank God, I have never once been molested, and you may remain perfectly convinced that I shall take every due care of myself. On one of my country visits one evening, I descried a pair of most brilliant eyes peeping through a hedge at me, which, with a true maternal

feeling, I at once recognised as belonging to a child of mine. I stopped my palanquin, and in a moment rushed out Beeneo, whose stepfather, you may remember, stole her from me some eight or nine months ago. Our words were few that night; but, as I had now discovered where my child was, it was comparatively easy to get at her; so I took an early opportunity of visiting her little abode again, and a most affectionate welcome she gave me. I brought her a large-print Testament, which she received joyfully; and on questioning her whether she still remembered how to read it, she said, "Yes, how could I forget?" On this I opened at the tenth of John, and pointed to the fourteenth verse: "I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine." I was surprised to find her read this readily. I then said, "Yes, Beeneo has read this, but she does not *understand*." On which she looked up archly at me, replying, "Yes, I know," and translated it into Malay immediately. Still uncertain, I doubtingly said, "Well, I am glad to find you know the meaning of the words; but you can't tell me who the Good Shepherd is, can you?" "I know that's Jesus Christ," was her ready response without one minute's hesitation. I sat with her for some time, and all her remarks and looks proved to me an interest in the subject. As I came out of her house, a mother hen had just gathered her brood together, on which I said to Beeneo, "When you see your hen collect her chickens, what do you think of?" "I know; I remember what I learned at school," she replied; and in her broken tongue said, "As a hen *gaderet* her chickens under her wings, so would I have *gadered de*, but *dou* wouldst not." On meeting her husband, she begged me to ask him to allow her to spend the next Sunday with me; and the meeting between Chuneo, Hanco, and herself (to say nothing of myself) was not

a little joyous. I thought of Krummacher's pretty chapter on the "Hidden Church," as I looked on Beeneo's poor little hut, in the midst of the sugar plantation where it stands, and felt convinced God was secreting one of His jewels under that thatched roof, over which I do believe He will watch as over the apple of His eye.'

THE STORY OF BEEBEEKIN AND ANLEANG.

'Towards the close of the year 1850, or commencement of 1851, a nice, respectable, good-tempered-looking, middle-aged Chinese woman entered my schoolroom and told me that she had an adopted daughter whom she was desirous of placing under my care, and asked me if I would allow the girl to come and spend a fortnight under my roof, in order to try if she would take kindly to the school before entering into a permanent agreement with me. The girl being about fourteen years of age—a time of life when most Chinese mothers would rather think of the marriage of their daughters than of their entrance on school-life—I was the more willing to receive her. Her name was Anleang. She was a native of Siak, in the Island of Sumatra, and in early life had been adopted by the woman whom I must introduce to you by the title of Beebeekin. The latter, however, had been much disappointed in the girl, and was much distressed by Anleang's peevish, perverse temper. The only system of education with which the Chinese of the Straits of Malacca are acquainted is that connected with the rod, and the continually-repeated injunction laid upon me by the parents on placing their children under my charge was contained in these Malay words: "Pukul, pukul, pukul, sama-diyer, baik, baik, baik" ("Beat, beat, beat her well"). Beebeekin told me she had followed this plan in bringing up her adopted

daughter, but she only seemed to grow worse and worse every day. Anleang appeared to me to be an affectionate girl, of a very pettish, petulant temper, but possessed of very good sense—active, and willing to learn. Her ignorance on entering the school was something deplorable, and well do I recollect overhearing her conversation with another schoolgirl as they were seated at work on a mat beneath my window. The elder pupil asked her what she thought became of people when they died. She replied that Satan has a kind of triturating machine, in which he puts many people after they are dead, in which their bones are pulverized and their flesh reduced to pulp. This mass he works up again into the shape of pigs, ducks, fish, etc., and sends them back thus metamorphosed into the world again. Anleang, however, showed early much delight in instruction, and appeared greatly struck with the absurdity, as well as wickedness, of idolatry. She also appeared to appreciate the value of a salvation bought, not “with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ”: for when asking the class to which she belonged whether the blood of Christ could save from all sin, she replied with great earnestness: “Yes, one drop of His blood is enough to take away the sins of the whole world.” At the end of about two years (during which time I found Anleang a most gentle, docile pupil, exceedingly desirous to please, and most diligent in learning), a note was laid upon my table, written in Malay, and of which I give as literal a translation as possible: “I have something to say to you, my beloved miss. Don’t be angry with me. Has not God said, ‘Whosoever cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out’? I wish to turn to God, and I hope He will help me, and assuredly then as long as I live will I serve the Lord God. Teacher, please pray for me. Miss,

I will never go back to walk in those ways of darkness in which I formerly walked, which were as erroneous as foolish. From this time I desire to give myself up to Him who made me. Good-morning. This is from Anleang."

'Soon after my receipt of this note she was seized with a violent fever, and I being her sole nurse in sickness, her affections were drawn towards me more strongly than ever, and I endeavoured to make use of my influence over her, to lead her to twine those affections, not around a poor sinful teacher, but around the cross of that Redeemer whose free grace and mercy had chosen her from among the heathen to His praise. The girl affording the most undeniable evidences of earnestness and sincerity, and being duly instructed in the Christian religion, Miss Cooke (my successor) had the pleasure of standing as special witness of her baptism, which took place about the middle of the year 1853; and towards the close of the same year, at her own earnest request, she became a communicant, and her conduct since has been such as truly to rejoice the heart of those who have watched over her spiritual progress with deep and prayerful interest, and who now desire to render all the glory and praise due to the free, electing love of that God who has called this once poor ignorant young heathen out of darkness, and has translated her into the kingdom of His dear Son. The Chinese woman who had adopted this young girl was struck with the improvement in her temper and deportment, and she began to be a frequent visitor at the school, spending whole days among us, and appearing to approve highly of the establishment. Her sister, who was a widow, died some little time after Anleang had entered the school. She left two very nice children—one a girl about eight or nine years old, named

Kim, the other a little boy about seven, named San. These two orphan children being left totally unprovided for, their aunt, Beebeekin, deemed it her best plan to place them both at school. I received them willingly, as they seemed sprightly, intelligent children, and were sooner at home with me than is usually the case with the young natives. The 115th Psalm was frequently the portion of Scripture which formed the groundwork of my instruction to the young heathen when first placed under my care. "Their idols are silver and gold," etc., verses 4-7, were the portions I particularly wished to illustrate to them. Thus I would take a flower, and bid some of them smell it, and then inquire whether they would have perceived the difference if, instead of a flower, I had given them an aurian* to smell. They smiled, and answered in the affirmative. I would then call one of them to me, and draw a pin from my dress, or take my open penknife, and threaten playfully to prick them. They, of course, declared their unwillingness to submit to the operation, and, on my asking them why, would answer that it would pain them, or that it would make them bleed. Having thus pointed out to them their own power of sensation in this very simple but practical way, I used to ask them when they went home to put the same tests to their idols, and on their return to school to tell me whether they evinced the same sensation of which the children had proved themselves possessed. The lesson thus given was no sooner heard than forgotten by the greater part, but such was not the case with my little boy San. On returning home to the house of his aunt, he jumped up on the species of altar placed beneath the idol, on which portions of fowl, duck, sweetmeats, rice,

* The aurian is a fruit about the size of a melon, the odour of which is most horrible, being a compound of the smell of garlic, gas, and asafœtida.

etc., were usually laid as offerings. Looking round for some sharp-pointed instrument, he descried a three-pronged fork. He seized hold of it, and, summoning up all his courage (for all the natives have a dread of their idols), he plunged the fork into the idol's cheek, and stood motionless for a few moments to see whether blood would flow from the wound, or voice of pain proceed from the paper god. No such signs of sensation appearing, the little boy jumped down, and said to his sister Kim, who had been the sole witness of this (to Chinese eyes) most sacrilegious proceeding: "What miss told us is true. I can feel; my blood would flow if I were wounded, but the idol has shown no sign of pain; no blood has appeared, and it has not screamed as I should have done. I will not believe in idols any more." The sister Kim, somewhat aghast at the audacity of her brother, ran to tell her aunt, crying out: "Heigh, Bee-bee, Beebee! San has pierced our idol's cheek with a fork." The aunt, who was at this time, though unknown to me, very sceptical on the subject of idol power, entered the room, calling out: "San, San, what have you been doing?" The little boy most honestly told the whole tale, and confessed his want of faith in the idol. Bee-beekin, more than half convinced of the same, told San and Kim to say nothing about it, as she was afraid her mother (a stanch old idolatress who lived with them) would be angry. In due time the old grand-aunt entered the room, and sat down in the usual lazy, listless native style, when, chancing to raise her eyes, they fell upon the idol, and she for the first time perceived the injury it had sustained. "Heigh, heigh!" said she with dismay, "what has happened to our idol? Who has done it?" The daughter, Beebeekin, tried to soothe her, saying: "Mother, it was neither you nor I that did it. Do not

distress yourself about it. We will hope that no evil will befall us." For it is the general idea that, if the idol be injured in any manner, some misfortune will descend upon the household. The old woman relapsed into silence, when at last a comfortable thought was suggested to her mind, which was indeed a bitter satire on the idol in which she trusted, viz., that perhaps it was the cat which had clawed its cheek. This anecdote was told me by Kim on their return to school, and shortly after repeated to me by the aunt, who told me that, when she placed the children in the school, she had thought the Christian religion was just like any other religion, and had its own rites and ceremonies, which it was proper for white people to observe; but that as she had come backward and forward to school, and had attended the mission chapel, she had learned to form a very different estimate of it; for she perceived its influence on the heart and understanding and conduct, and professed herself desirous of embracing it. With a view to this, she placed herself under my care for regular instruction, which she received with the docility of a little child; and when I left Singapore, I commended her to the care of our very diligent missionary, Mr. Keasberry, and in a letter received lately from my successor, she tells me that Beebeekin was baptized on January 22 of this year, and by her desire little Kim and San were baptized at the same time, they having a contempt for idolatry, and being adopted by her, and placed in the mission school for Christian education, they will be brought up in the faith, into which they have thus early had the privilege of being baptized. I shall conclude this sketch by the remark that Beebeekin is the only Chinese woman who has attained middle life whom I have, during a course of ten years, found desirous of instruction or willing to embrace Christianity.'

AN ANECDOTE ABOUT LITTLE AMOY.

'An incident which, though very trifling in itself, pleased me occurred last Sunday. I was standing by my venetians, for windows we have none here, when I saw a nice little simple-hearted child, named Amoy, come from underneath the veranda surrounding the house; here she stopped, and looked eagerly around on both sides, as if fearful of observation; and I retreated, fearing all was not right; but judge of my pleasure when I saw this little one dart over the flower-bed and plunge herself into the midst of a thick creeping plant, whose leaves almost entirely hid her! There I saw her kneel down, and, clasping her little hands, I heard her tones were those of prayer. The recording angel, I feel convinced, knows them all; but the only words that reached me were *ampun* (pardon), and *amat kasihan* (very kind). She was not above five minutes in her leafy oratory, when up she sprang and darted away, singing one of their hymn tunes as gaily as a lark. None but the heart of a teacher of the heathen can fully enter into my feelings.'

THE THREE SISTERS.

But amongst all Miss Grant's scholars there were none in whom she took deeper interest than in three sisters, Chuneo, Haneo, and Keychae, children of well-to-do parents, and who spent many years under her care. Haneo and Chuneo proved early susceptible to Christian influence. They were diverse in character as Mary and Martha of old, Chuneo being of a bright, cheerful disposition; Haneo more subject to depression and fears lest her sins were beyond the reach of pardon. 'To Chuneo,' wrote Miss Grant, 'the Gospel is as wine, giving her a merry heart, and she brings me verses full

of the joy of the Lord being her strength, while Haneo, her younger sister, repeats such Psalms as begin with "Hide not Thy face," etc.'

One Sunday evening when Miss Grant was at church, some friends left at home found Haneo in the children's bedroom talking to them about Jesus and His love. It was eight o'clock, each child seated at the foot of her little cot. Haneo spoke to one or two of the most careless by name, and ended with most earnest entreaties to her own mother, who happened to be present. The effect on the little congregation was most powerful. Chuneo wept aloud; some of the little ones who had gone to sleep were awakened by her voice, and sat leaning on their little elbows in bed, looking at her with amazement. One of those present said, 'Really, as I looked at that girl's countenance, she seemed to me to be filled with the Holy Ghost.'

But Haneo proved her zeal by an act requiring more courage than was shown in this little home scene.

She and her sister owned a little plantation near Singapore, left them by their father. When Haneo spent a day there, she took the idols which had been stuck up by the labourers in various parts of the garden and dashed them to the ground, and when the men looked up amazed at her, she pointed out to them the powerlessness of the idols to defend themselves. This act might have brought her into trouble had she not been of the highest caste, *Hokkien*, and the men of the lowest, *Macao*.

Keychae was much younger than Chaneo and Haneo, and her character presented much greater difficulties. Those who can follow with interest the story of how a proud heart can be brought low, and one who has long kicked against the pricks of conscience be won at last, will not think Miss Grant's history of her too long. It

concludes at the period when Miss Grant was compelled, after ten years of faithful labour, to leave Singapore and resign her much-loved school to her successor, Miss Cooke.

STORY OF KEYCHAE.

' Keychae was the first girl whom I saw on my arrival in Singapore. She was then about ten years old, a remarkably intelligent, clever-looking girl, and possessed of more energy of character than is common amongst the natives. At the time when she was first introduced to me she knew very little, but it was evident that she was one possessed of considerable natural talent, whilst the marked fault of her character was pride. She was proud of her personal appearance, proud of her family, proud of her intellect, and proud of her nation. When placed under regular instructions her progress was rapid ; she soon mastered the English language sufficiently to read it fluently and with understanding, and in a comparatively short time she attained to such a knowledge of Scripture as made me tremble for her, for I could perceive nothing in her to warrant the hope that she had the smallest desire to participate in those blessings of the Gospel on which she could so readily descant. In the meantime her elder sisters and her favourite brother openly professed Christianity, which, along with Keychae, they had learnt at school. Shortly after the baptism of these young people, the three sisters were removed from school ; they were furnished not only with Bibles and Prayer-Books, but also with " Cruden's Concordance," Marsden's Malay and English Dictionary, and other books well calculated to assist them in carrying out the study of Scripture, and to aid them in keeping up and improving their knowledge of English, when left in their

own home, without any but very occasional instruction. When thus at a distance from school, and dwelling under her native mother's roof, Keychae showed no disposition to return to any open acts of idolatry ; her reason had been convinced of the folly and vanity of idol worship, and she joined with her sisters in many of the outward observances of Christianity, such as family worship, occasional attendance at the mission chapel and church, observance of the Sunday, and such-like. Heathen relatives came in from time to time and jeered at the elder sisters for having become, as they so termed it, English-women. On such occasions they would turn to Keychae and ask her if she, too, meant to disgrace their Chinese name by forsaking the worship of their ancestors. She invariably replied " No ; I am a Chinese." I visited her frequently during successive years ; she always treated me with great respect, and showed me many marks of affection, but was completely silent whenever I spoke to her on religion. I believed her at that time to be one whose judgment was convinced of the truth of Christianity, but whose heart, alike without faith or repentance, was entirely indifferent to it. Time passed on, and it pleased God to send consumption as His messenger to remove the mother from the head of this young family. Keychae had been the mother's favourite child, and she was very warmly attached to her parent. When she saw that her mother was evidently sinking under disease, her grief knew no bounds, and when at the request of the Christian members of the family I prayed for their mother, that if it were His will she might be restored to health, and if not, that she might cast aside all trust in idols and be led to repentance, Keychae threw herself on her knees beside me and joined most fervently in the prayer. At last the mother died, but just before her

death she called her brother to her bedside, and expressed her wish that her three elder children should be allowed to follow out the religion I had taught them; but she charged him to see that Keychae remained an idolatress. On occasion of the funeral, when the idolatrous rites at the grave commenced, the three Christian members of the family withdrew, and seated themselves on a bank at a little distance. Contrary to all expectation, Keychae too withdrew from the other idolatrous relations, and sat down beside the Christian group on the bank. After her mother's death she was placed under the care of Chuneo and her husband, and a year or two thus passed away; but at last Keychae's temper grew so imperious, and she was so proud and insolent in her deportment to her gentle sister Chuneo and her husband, that we all agreed that the elder sister ought no longer to expose herself to such disrespectful treatment. Keychae was then placed as housekeeper over her brother's house, and when, instead of being ministered to in every way, she began to know something of the trouble of a ménage, and that she had to please others instead of finding her own pleasure, her pride of spirit became greatly softened, and at last, on occasion of her brother being threatened with an attack of disease of the most painful kind, to counteract which change of air and scene were deemed necessary, she expressed her anxious wish to be allowed to come back to school and live under my care. This took place about the commencement of 1853. On her proposing to return to my house, I told her that I anticipated returning to England in six or eight months, but that I would receive her with pleasure, and promised to recommend her to my successor on my departure. Nothing could be more satisfactory than was her conduct towards me—obedient, gentle, and most tractable; but on the one

subject of religion she was, as ever, mute, though she now, as one of my scholars (though nearly twenty years of age), attended my Bible-class daily, learnt Scripture by heart, was present at family worship, and was most regular in her attendance at church and chapel. My heart yearned over this girl, for she seemed to me very like one inwardly trembling as she heard of "righteousness and judgment to come," whilst saying to conviction, "Go thy way until a convenient season." On Miss Cooke's arrival as my successor, Keychae's whole demeanour changed—her manner was more than ever devoted to myself, but all her liveliness of spirit and proud bearing were gone, and it pained me to see her pale face and dejected air. I looked at her with concern, and suspected her of endeavouring to hide from me some illness which she felt oppressing her. At last I discovered that my poor girl had never thoroughly believed, nor realized the fact, that her old teacher was about to leave her, until the sight of Miss Cooke amongst us convinced her of the truth of it. She said not a word, however, to me, but her grief was so genuine and uncontrollable that it distressed me to witness it, and a short time before my departure I found a note laid on my table, which proved to be from Keychae. I wish I had preserved this note, for it contained a most interesting disclosure of her state of mind. After relieving her hitherto pent-up feelings by writing a most impassioned burst of grief in the prospect of being separated from me, she proceeded to tell me that the struggle with pride had been dreadful within her, but that she was determined I should not go away until she had told me all that was in her heart. She informed me that for years her mind had been thoroughly convinced of the truth of Christianity, but that she had endeavoured to harden her heart against instruction, and

to silence the voice of conscience ; but the power to do so any longer was gone, and she wished me, before I left, to know that she bitterly repented of the past, that pride was subdued, and that henceforth her only desire was to sit like Mary at the feet of Jesus, and obey His will in all things. She expressed her wonder at the goodness of God, who had not cut her off in the midst of her rebellion and stout-heartedness ; told me how self-condemned she had felt, as she had seen other girls of the school who had not received half so much instruction, and were her juniors in age, coming forward as converts to Christianity whilst she yet remained in heathenism. In short, a more humble, penitent, touching acknowledgment of sin I never read, concluding with an entreaty that I would add my prayers to hers that the Saviour, whom she had so long scorned, might not now scorn her, but fulfil to her His blessed promise, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Many notes passed between us on the subject of her own spiritual state, and she entreated me to allow her publicly to profess the faith of Christ on the Sunday previous to my leaving Singapore. I feared that there might be something of love to myself mixed up with her religious feelings, and I therefore advised her to wait until I was gone, and then to come forward as a candidate for baptism. Miss Cooke and I consulted together on the subject, and our kind and most valued chaplain agreed that her baptism should take place on the Sunday after my departure. That it took place as proposed I learned soon after my arrival in England, and I have since had several most interesting and affectionate notes from her.'

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST TEN YEARS: 1853—1863.

'Make haste, O man, to live,
For thou so soon must die.
Time hurries past thee like the breeze—
How swift its moments fly!
Make haste, O man, to live!

'The useful, not the great,
The thing that never dies;
The silent toil that is not lost—
Set these before thine eyes.
Make haste, O man, to live!

'The seed whose leaf and flower,
Though poor in human sight,
Bring forth at last the eternal fruit,
Sow thou both day and night.
Make haste, O man, to live!
H. BONAR.

THERE was something pathetic in the short inter-
course of Miss Grant and Miss Cooke together
at Singapore, the one laying down her work, the
other taking it up; the one wearied after a decade of use-
ful, happy effort, the other, unknown to herself, com-
mencing a period of labour four times as long, and which
was only to end with her life. They met and parted, not
to meet again till they rejoiced together in the presence
of their Lord.

Immediately on Miss Grant's departure, Miss Cooke
stepped into her place as superintendent of the Chinese

girls' school. Her first Sunday was a memorable one, for on that day Keychae was baptized, and two other girls along with her.

Haneo, Chuneo, and Anleang were able to give valuable help in teaching the younger children, and thus Miss Cooke began work under very favourable auspices. Perhaps all missionaries, however, share more or less in the early experiences so well and touchingly described by Miss McClenaghan at the end of her first year in the mission-field in Japan. She writes :

‘ Probably I should think many, if not all, who have followed Him into the foreign field have passed through experiences more or less like mine—at first the trembling watching to see what the Master would say, the doubts that would come as to whether it could be His will to leave the already almost emptied home, His will to leave work which He had given, and for which He seemed to have fitted ; then the setting out, feeling the Everlasting Arms bearing one up more tangibly than ever before, the sweet communings with the Master during the long delightful voyage, the almost home-like welcome from the missionaries here, the interest and excitement of all the new surroundings ; then the settling down to earnest study and teaching, both of which test one’s patience and become prosaic if one for a moment forgets that they are “ for a King,” the old doubts recurring with double force in moments of weakness or overwork ; the utterly indescribable way in which one almost feels the powers of darkness all around (and especially in one’s study), and in which one learns what is meant by the “ fiery darts of the wicked one ” ; then the glowing realization of “ the exceeding greatness ” of the power of the Living One, who fills even the weakest of His children with “ power over all the power of the enemy ” ; and now, as I write,

the full, triumphant, ever-deepening conviction that He has led me every step of the way, that He is our Life, even mine, and that the body, soul, and spirit which are fitted with that life, "fitted with all the fulness of God, cannot fail to be used by the great Master-Workman, whatever be the daily work which He gives."'

Miss Cooke began at once to study Malay with a Pundit, and here she was exceedingly fortunate, for the Malay language is the easiest of Oriental tongues, both in pronunciation and construction. It is 'soft, sweet, and simple.' There is no declination of nouns or adjectives, and 'the absurdity of attributing difference of sex to *things* did not suggest itself to the framers or methodizers of the Malay language,' thus sparing the learner much of the usual trouble in acquiring foreign tongues, either European or Asiatic. The chief interest in the language is to notice the words of Sanskrit or Arabic origin largely blended with it. From the Sanskrit is derived many such words as joy, understanding, prudence, loyalty; from Arabic is borrowed the name of God, *Allah taala*, and *Hua* for God or Jehovah. The Malays formerly worshipped *Dewata*, deities or demigods, but had no knowledge of the Supreme Being. Whether they ever had a complete alphabet of their own or not is unknown. They have, at any rate, adopted the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic, with the addition of six of their own. The Arabic characters are used for writing, but books are printed in either the Roman or Arabic. The Bible was translated 'with singular skill and accuracy' in Amsterdam in 1731, and afterwards with Malay help at Batavia in 1758. The Chinese settlers in Singapore all speak Malay, and their children often know it alone, hence the immediate necessity of Miss Cooke's learning it; and we are told by a friend of hers

that 'she acquired the colloquial Malay very well indeed, and was able to read and write it in the Roman character; but,' he adds, 'I do not think she ever studied it in the Arabic character, or had such a knowledge of it as would have enabled her to venture upon translation.' It was for daily use in conversation and teaching she needed it, and so far as was required for this she made herself mistress of it.*

At this period Miss Cooke was still in the prime of life. In appearance she was thoroughly Saxon, with very fair hair, light blue eyes, and rather tall and well-developed figure, a pleasant though not beautiful face, and an expression of mingled kindness, intelligence, and decision. She was born to rule, and enjoyed doing so. Hers was no half-hearted disposition. She was strong in her likes and dislikes, kindly and sociable to all, but reserving decidedly very specially warm places in her heart for those who showed her kindness. She was capable of great and sustained effort, and was gifted with 'a cheerful heart that doeth good like a medicine.' A healthy mind in a healthy body was her happy endowment, and she never troubled the committee which employed her with any tales of small troubles. Yet we can hardly suppose that the early months of her residence in Singapore could have been entirely free from annoyance, for its steamy climate was in absolute contrast to the dry cold air of her native Norfolk. One who knew

* Philologists divide languages into three great divisions, and they have classified them according to structure and sound and their genetic connection or relationship as to origin. The three divisions are the Isolating, the Agglutinating, and the Inflexional. The Chinese, as a monosyllabic language, belongs to the first or Isolating class, and the Malay, as belonging to the Turanian group, is of the second or Agglutinating class. Languages of this class possess certain unalterable roots to which other syllables which are capable of modification are affixed to express relations.'—MAJOR MCNAIR.

her in those days remembers her being troubled by an irritating rash, not unfrequent, perhaps, amongst those who escape serious illness in a tropical climate. But no notice of such trifling ailments found a place in her letters home. She soon found many kind friends amongst the English residents, and in the house of the one just mentioned she was an almost daily visitor. Her sociability and liveliness made her a welcome guest, while to her the change was very acceptable from the cramping daily intercourse with Chinese children to the educated and refined society of the English. It may be that at first she was somewhat tempted to participate too freely in this pleasant relaxation; but her heart was too true to her work, and her love to her Saviour too deep, to allow of her yielding to it. 'If thou hast found honey, eat so much as is sufficient for thee' is advice a Christian readily acts upon. The missionary ought not to refuse the proffered kindness of her fellow-countrymen, yet she must partake of it with a wise moderation. On the other hand, Miss Cooke's naturally proud spirit sometimes chafed at the foolish disposition met with here and there amongst some English men and women to look down upon a missionary as if he or she could not be a gentleman or lady. But it is one advantage of an active Christian life that those who live it have no time to resent or even to notice little slights and annoyances, any more than the traveller in an express train can observe all the trifling inequalities of the road. And Miss Cooke's life became more and more devoted to her work, so that one who knew her well could truthfully say of her: 'Her noble life was from beginning to end so simple and impressive, so thoroughly in harmony with Christian virtue and prudence, that we always pictured her as part and parcel of the mission to which she devoted



SOME OF MISS COOKE'S PUPILS.

To face p. 33

both her body and soul. She sank herself that she might raise that, seeking that she herself might be forgotten and her Saviour remembered and glorified.' There was nothing exciting or romantic in her work. Day by day, rising early ere the great heat became oppressive, she held a Scripture class for her girls. Some of them boarded in the school; others she would at times go out and fetch from their native homes. At one period she taught also some of the secular classes, but she soon found it was better to leave this branch of instruction to the younger teachers, who were more intimate with the language. In 1855 she obtained the valuable aid of Miss Ryan, herself born in Singapore, who continued to be her mainstay in the school throughout the whole of her career, Miss Cooke being thus set free to give more general superintendence to the mission.

One peculiar duty fell to her lot, being in the place of a mother to the children under her care. By Chinese custom, when a girl reaches the age of thirteen or fourteen she is kept at home, and hardly allowed to stir out of the house until she is married. Miss Cooke was expected to look out husbands for her pupils, who were usually married at the close of their two or three years' stay with her. Those girls whom Miss Grant had left under her care were, of course, the first to leave her. Chuneo was soon married, and brought up her five children carefully as Christians. Haneo married Kin Sing, a good Chinese scholar, who was often of great use to Miss Cooke when any 'real Chinese came within her reach,' such, for instance, as could not talk Malay, and they both taught embroidery in her school. It was a happy but by no means brilliant match. 'For he is an invalid,' wrote Miss Cooke, 'not able to take regular work; but he and Haneo are two bright, sweet Christians, and I feel

it a privilege for myself and my school to have them under my roof. I give them two rooms in this house, and they eat rice with the children. They have not a farthing of their own to depend on. Haneo would have been my matron, but she is too young and too weak.' At a later period Haneo and her husband went to live at a place called Roochoo, twelve miles in the country. Here she worked hard to make known the glad truths of the Gospel to her country-people, 'and her loved teacher would come from time to time to help her by speaking and praying with the little company of listeners she gathered together.' In this way each Christian girl who married became a fresh centre of life and light to those around her. When trouble came, the old pupils were welcomed back like daughters to the home-like school. Poor Chuneo, for one, early lost three of her five children, and was thankful to stay with Miss Cooke for a little change, and be soothed by her in her bitter bereavements. Beebeekin and Anleang continued some years together in the school, the former becoming a bright Christian and acting as a matron, while her adopted daughter, no longer needing 'beating, beating,' was the head girl in the school; and 'I am thankful,' wrote Miss Cooke, 'that the younger children have so good an example before them. She works hard, helping me in every way.' But Anleang, too, had soon half regretfully to leave the happy nest. She mentions her approaching marriage in her last report to the committee :

' December 29, 1862.

' MY DEAR FRIENDS,

' I am sure that you will be glad to hear that some of my class have gone up to the first class; only two of my old girls are still remaining. They are all

improving in reading, but I am not quite satisfied with their geography; but, above all, I am thankful to say that they all like to hear about Jesus. I hope they will soon be able to read their Bibles. They can work very nicely, and always take in turn to teach the infants' class.

'Dear friends, I am sorry that this will be my last report, as I am to be married soon. I wish to thank you all, dear friends, for your great kindness in providing for me, not only for my body, but especially my soul. I have had a very happy home in the school for fourteen years. I am so sorry to leave it and dear Miss Cooke; but I shall live as close to the school as I can, so that I can be ready to help Miss Ryan while dear Miss Cooke is away; and I shall always feel that the Saviour whom I have learnt to know and love is abiding with me wherever I am, and I hope I may have grace to glorify Him, by not living for myself alone, but by trying to do good to all around me. Indeed I shall not forget you, dear friends, but I shall hope to write to you sometimes. Please do not forget me, but believe that I shall always be your grateful

'ANLEANG.'

A Chinese bride is not, as with us, arrayed in white. Here is the description of the usual costume: 'A proper Chinese dress was prepared for the bride. The dress consisted of a yellow silk petticoat, richly embroidered, with a dress of crimson brocaded silk trimmed with rich embroidery. The head-dress was lent for the day by the bridegroom's friends. I fear the dress will seem rather an extraordinary one to some of our charitable friends. But such is worn by the poorest Chinese bride, and is usually hired for the day. After talking the subject

over with the Bishop of Victoria and Mrs. Smith, I decided that the best plan would be to purchase a wedding-dress, and keep it as school property, to be worn by any who marry from the school.'

One happy result of Singapore being under British rule was that poor little Chinese girls, often sold by their heartless parents to Malay sailors for a mere trifle, were, on landing on the island, rescued by the police from being again bargained for, and were brought to the Chinese Girls' School. Sometimes the sudden addition to its numbers appeared at first a doubtful blessing. One day, in November, 1859, six big girls were thus brought to Miss Cooke. 'They knew not what awaited them in the strange house with the white lady. Their howling at first was deafening; they pulled down their hair, beat themselves about, saying they had better die than remain there, and they refused their food. This was an unpromising beginning, but Christian love and firmness triumphed over some of them. It was subsequently found needful to return two of them to the police, and one ran away, but three remained in the school. Two made a public profession of faith in Christ, and were admitted by baptism into the visible Church. But for such a refuge as the Chinese Girls' School what, humanly speaking, would have become of them?'

On another occasion five little children were brought by the police on account of the cruel manner in which they had been treated. They were entirely given up to the mission, and grew up strong and healthy. Each of the elder girls was put in charge of one of them, and they were baptized by the names of Tien (Chinese for Patience), Choon (Hope), Sien (Faith), Jin (Charity), Inn (Grace). They soon learnt to read their Bibles in Malay and English.

But while the school was the loved centre of Miss Cooke's labours, they by no means ended there. She almost immediately on her arrival began to visit Chinese women in their own homes, and from this went on to conducting a mothers' meeting for them. The men, too, were not entirely forgotten. The result of these humble efforts, patiently continued for some time, was that a want began to be felt of some building in which a Chinese service could be held. To feel a want with Miss Cooke implied immediate efforts to meet it, with the result in this case described by her in a letter, July, 1857:

'As a little bungalow in the garden was standing useless, I have fitted it up for a church, and last Sunday we had the pleasure of seeing twenty men and five women worshipping in it. I need hardly say what joy it is to see these Chinese searching their Bibles, and to hear them singing in Chinese the praises of our God. This will not be an increased burthen on my mission funds; kind friends here supply all the needs of my little church, which I trust may prove a Bethel to many of the poor Chinese. This is the only Chinese service among the 50,000 here.'

In the same year Miss Cooke was cheered by a visit from Bishop Smith of Victoria, who wrote afterwards with warm appreciation of the school. 'It is for this energetic lady I would bespeak kindly sympathy and help. About thirty Chinese girls receive the blessing of Christian education, not merely geography, prominent facts of history, and learning large portions of Holy Scripture by heart, but the further and more important work of training in the habits of Christian religion, as a motive into the details of each day's actions. Ladies circumstanced as Miss Cooke have their times of discouragement. Living in comparative isolation from Christian society, they

have not at all times the privilege of communing with Christian friends. I know that an occasional letter of sympathy, the assurance that she has many congenial souls in her native country pleading for her and her Chinese girls, and also the practical proof that her educational and missionary efforts receive due pecuniary support, will do much to cheer her.'

The latter words may be applied to the needs of many ladies in the foreign field. In 1856 she also received much kind encouragement from a visit made to the school by the Bishop of Calcutta. He was pleased with a round they sang—'O Lord, save me. Teach me to know Thee; teach me to love Thee!'

From time to time the peaceful tenor of life in Singapore was disturbed by risings of the Chinese inhabitants, who were rapidly becoming the most numerous and powerful part of the population. Even in the first year of her residence Miss Cooke experienced something of this trouble. 'We have had,' she wrote, 'a most trying time of late from the outbreak of the natives, caused by the arrival of 16,000 Chinese amongst us. Of course this increase caused our provisions to be very dear, and consequently quarrels arose. For nearly a fortnight all business was stopped, and every European gentleman was obliged to become a soldier. The Malays were enlisted on our side, and the best of the convicts used as guards. I quite expected my house to be attacked. I had it constantly guarded for a fortnight, and have not dared to take my girls out to evening church. At first the Governor used very gentle means, but was at last obliged to issue proclamations that the Chinese found disturbing the peace were to be shot, and many were thus hurried into eternity. I do not think I once feared for myself, but I did for my poor girls; but here

we all are safe, wanting nothing but more thankful hearts.'

In 1857 the London committee were full of anxiety for their valued agent, the accounts of the state of Singapore which reached England being most alarming. But they were soon comforted and filled with gratitude by an assurance from her that, though others had suffered much, she and her little flock had been kept in peace and safety. 'The Lord has been better to us than all our fears. What effect the sad events in India (the Mutiny) may have on our natives we cannot tell, but while we praise God for the past we must trust Him for the future.'

In 1861 a new mission-house was built, through the kindness chiefly of Mr. T. H. Campbell. It is delightfully situated within the grounds of Government House, on an eminence above the town. It could contain forty boarders, and was soon filled, and so continued almost without intermission. It was indeed a hive of busy bees. What with the daily lessons of the younger girls, the household work of those older, and all the various classes and meetings held, there was perhaps scarcely so busy a spot in all Singapore. To interest the girls in missionary work Miss Cooke started a weekly working party. When she heard of revivals in religion in other lands she held special prayer-meetings to plead that droppings of the heavenly shower might fall there also.

'Lord, I hear of showers of blessing
Thou art scattering full and free,
Showers the thirsty land refreshing:
Let some droppings fall on me.'

During her first ten years in Singapore Miss Cooke enjoyed almost uninterrupted good health. The year after her arrival, indeed, she had an illness which made it desirable for her to go somewhere for change. 'I am,'

she wrote in April, 'in Dr. D.'s hands, and with his care, followed by running wild for a fortnight in Malacca, I think I shall be quite as strong as ever. I believe I need this change, but I much doubt if I can make up my mind to go. I am thankful to enjoy the same buoyancy and elasticity of spirit as I did at home. The children are all now singing the evening hymn ; this is a sweet sound in a heathen land. I am sitting alone in my study with no creature near me but the "night bird," its note just like knocking on ice, a sort of liquid note.' This attack, besides a very bad cold which hung about her some time in 1858, appears to have been so far her only experience of ill-health. 'I am thankful,' she wrote to say, 'that I am well, which, under God's blessing, I feel I owe to regular exercise.' No doubt regular work, regular meals, and regular exercise promoted her good health, combined as they were with the peace of mind which arises from casting every care upon God, and resting in His love. She had, however, in addition, a naturally sound and strong constitution ; but even this could not altogether overcome the effects of the depressing climate, and after nine and a half years' unremitting work she was compelled, with full sanction from the committee, to return to England on furlough, leaving the school in charge of Miss Ryan, her able and trustworthy fellow-labourer.

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS: 1863—1875.

'The honest, earnest man must stand and work;
The woman also.'

E. B. BROWNING.

'Only work that is for God alone
Hath an unceasing guerdon of delight,
A guerdon unaffected by the sight
Of great success, not by its loss o'erthrown.'

F. R. HAVERGAL.

MISS COOKE rapidly recovered health and strength after her arrival in England, and was able to visit many friends, new and old, and to awaken, or deepen, their interest in Singapore. While here she received from Anleang an account of the first death which occurred among the former inmates of the school—that of Gek, a girl who had taken charge before her marriage of In (one of the five rescued little ones), and whose husband was 'a truly good man, and kind to her.' The two used to dine with Miss Cooke every Sunday, and it was hoped that she would long be able to carry on a class of women in her house. But her day of work here was soon to close.

LETTER OF ANLEANG.

'July 3, 1863.

'MY DEAREST MISS,

'I know it will grieve you very much to hear about poor Gek's death. I am sure you will be very

sorry, but you will rejoice when I tell you how sweetly she fell asleep in Jesus. She was altogether ill for about twelve days. On Thursday she came to me for our reading and prayer, and after that she told me she had a little pain behind her ear. This pain went on increasing, so at last Seboo (her husband) sent for the doctor. Dr. Robertson attended her, and was very kind indeed. On Saturday, June 20, she was very ill, and after this the doctor gave her up, and from this time she let us know how much she loved the Saviour. She said to Seboo, "When the heathen die, everything must be quite dark; but when we who love Jesus die, the way is as bright as the sun." On Sunday morning she did not know Miss Ryan, and thought she was you, and said, "Miss, I stand fast," quite distinctly.

'Keychae and Beebeekin were with her all Sunday, and as soon as she saw Keychae, she said, "Speak to me only of Jesus." When Keychae read the twenty-third Psalm to her, she said, "His will be done," and then she added, "It is God that takes us away from the world." In the evening, when Tempang, Kim, and the other big girls came to see her, they knelt beside her bedside and prayed, and when Seboo told her, she covered up her face and prayed very loud, and prayed that the heathen may all be brought to know Jesus. It was only when she spoke about Christ she could be understood; the rest of the time she was delirious, or going off in a sleep. Mr. H. was very kind, and stayed two nights with poor Gek, and read many comforting chapters to her. She took his hand, and said, "Miss Cooke." Mr. H. said to her, "Never mind, Gek: you will see Miss Cooke by-and-by," and then she fell asleep; but in the middle of the night she said she saw Jesus coming to take her, and on Monday morning she did not seem to know anything, but breathed



A GROUP OF PUPILS FROM THE SCHOOL.

To face p. 43.

very hard, and then it got to be more gentle, and then she died.

'Dearest Miss, I cannot tell you how much the girls and myself feel poor Gek's death. She is the first among us that has gone, and now I pray that we may be all like Gek—prepared when God sees fit to call us away. And how thankful we ought to be to God for having this school open for us where we may learn about Jesus!

'Your affectionate

'ANLEANG.'

Miss Cooke could but rejoice, amid her tears, that the first of her girls to die should leave her testimony that the 'way was bright as the sun.'

Nothing in England interested Miss Cooke so much as the ragged schools which she visited in London. She became fired with the desire to establish one in Singapore, a wish she carried into effect as soon as possible after her return in December, 1864. She was then accompanied by Miss Houston, to whom this new branch of work was chiefly entrusted. On March 6, 1865, the first Chinese Ragged School was commenced, with one woman and three children. Some notes from Miss Cooke's diary give us a glimpse of the discouragements experienced at first:

'*March 8.*—Cholera raging among the natives; they are buried by fifties. Several Europeans have died. May our God prepare us for what He has prepared for us! Went to the Ragged School; five children and six women; an unexpected opening for a sort of mothers' meeting, as the women wish to learn to crochet babies' boots and shoes.

'Our own "five," now big children, go with Miss Houston every day to the Ragged School to try to win

the children, and it is beautiful to see what earnest little missionaries they are. I am sure Jesus smiles upon them, and accepts their little labour of love. One ragged child was watching a boat try to enter the harbour; at last it succeeded, when the child exclaimed, "They must have our *datoh* (idol) in the boat, or they could not have got in." I wish all Christians had such confidence in the power of our God.

'*March* 10.—A cheery day; six children, no women.

'*March* 11.—No school on Saturday. I think Miss Houston needs that day for rest, for though the work is not hard, the heat is intense.

'*March* 13.—Miss Houston rather dispirited; only five children, no women. It is uphill work to do good among so many hindrances. I wish Christians were as true to their Saviour as the poor heathen are to their idols.

'*March* 14.—More cheery to-day; eight children, and the mothers say the two nice children may return.

'*March* 15.—Again discouraged.

'*March* 16.—Eight children, and eight women ready to come to my mothers' meeting. I told them of Jesus, and Keychae commenced teaching them to crochet shoes and socks for their babies. All very hopeful.'

The school thus anxiously begun took root, and became a permanent institution, the numbers gradually rising to between thirty and forty. Ultimately a second ragged school was established. One of these was managed entirely by girls living in the Chinese Girls' School, and the other was carried on in the house of a former pupil, now married, the teacher being her sister. Miss Houston was often cheered by the manifest blessing of God on this work. 'Our Ragged School,' she wrote in 1868, 'is going on as happy as ever. We have great

cause to praise and thank God. You would be pleased to see their earnest little faces while I am giving the Scripture lessons. They like very much to hear stories from the Old Testament, especially about Joseph or Daniel; but sometimes, if I allow them for a change to choose what lesson they like, it is always 'Teach us about Jesus.'

Miss Cooke before leaving England had expressed a wish that Lord Shaftesbury, the honoured originator of ragged schools, should give his name as patron of the proposed Singapore Ragged School. He answered in a characteristic note as follows :

'It will give me great pleasure—far more pleasure than benefit to the school—to accept the office of patron.*

'I heartily wish I could render any service to a Chinese ragged school. I know the immense good done by ragged schools; I heartily thank God for it. There is every reason why the same good should result in Singapore.'

The good Earl lived long enough to hear these anticipations of success amply fulfilled. It was Miss Cooke's plan to set everyone with whom she had to do to work in some way or other. As soon as they were at all fit for it, the elder girls taught little new-comers; as they grew older, they were allowed to visit the Chinese poor and to help in nursing the sick. Sometimes they tended difficult cases with great devotion. One such case occurred in the autumn of 1866. Lalla, a woman who had formerly been a nurse in English families, was left alone, friendless and ill. 'She had saved some money,' wrote Miss Cooke, 'so she was no burden on us. Our girls became her nurses; two or three were constantly with her, ministering both to her soul and body; indeed, I believe

* Miss Cooke subsequently gave to the boarding-school the name of Shaftesbury Home, which it still bears.

she remained here to learn the way to heaven, for through their instrumentality she was led to the Saviour. Her illness was of a most painful nature, so that both the faith and bodily strength of the girls were greatly tried. One girl of eighteen, who came into the school about a year ago, was one of those with her when she died. We had no idea that this girl *understood* the things of Christ, but when she saw our poor little sick friend in great suffering, she spoke most beautifully to her of the Saviour's love and care, and burst out in an agony of prayer that the Saviour might be with her through the dark valley, and Lalla died in peace.'

Keychae one day discovered a young native girl secluded in a wretched hut in the jungle. She was a leper. Keychae told her of Him who healed the leper, and visited her from time to time. She had the happiness of seeing her 'earnestly seeking Christ for salvation.'

Mounio also, afterwards second wife of Anleang's husband, visited regularly, but with due precautions, a hapless leper woman.

To this admirable method of Miss Cooke in giving employment to these her Christian girls was no doubt greatly due their growth in grace and faithfulness to Christ. Early piety needs careful direction. If the young person is encouraged in quiet methods of spiritual usefulness, she will probably be saved from over-self-absorption, and will learn humility from the difficulties which have to be encountered. If, however, she is forced into situations of undue publicity, she will lose that modesty which is one of the brightest gems in Christian female character.

The *reality* of the work of grace in pupils of Miss Grant and Miss Cooke was thus abundantly proved by

both useful, holy lives and happy, holy deaths. 'Between 1865 and 1875 several schoolfellows followed Gek through the dark valley, and, like her, found it illumined by Him who was with them there. Tekniong was summoned to the heavenly home when she was on the eve of marriage. On Saturday, March 18, 1865, she was diligently embroidering her wedding slippers. On Sunday she was at church as usual. On the 20th she had an attack of illness, but on the 22nd was as well as usual; but during the night pain in the chest, and about the heart, came on. On Sunday, the 25th, she told Miss Ryan with great calmness that she would not long remain, and wished to go to Jesus, repeating the last hymn she had learnt, "The hour of my departure's come." Before giving her some medicine, and applying a blister, I said, "Dear Tekniong, if God should bless these means, you may get better, but if not, will it not be far better to be with Jesus?" She gave a very bright look, nodded her head, and squeezed my hand. As the clock was striking eleven she asked the hour, and on being told, said, "Now you need take no more care of me; I am going to be with Jesus;" then she repeated parts of her favourite hymns, "Rock of Ages" and "I heard the voice of Jesus say," and the 63rd Psalm. About a quarter past one she entered her rest.'

Little Kimkee, only eight years old, succumbed to an attack of fever, and, surrounded by heathen relatives, went home to the Saviour with the words of texts and hymns she had learnt to love, on her lips.

Dearest and sweetest, perhaps, of all, the loved Anleang was called away in 1868. She had been indeed a bright star in Miss Cooke's little mission. She had never been well since her last confinement in October, 1866, but 'we did not,' wrote her teacher, 'feel anxious about her

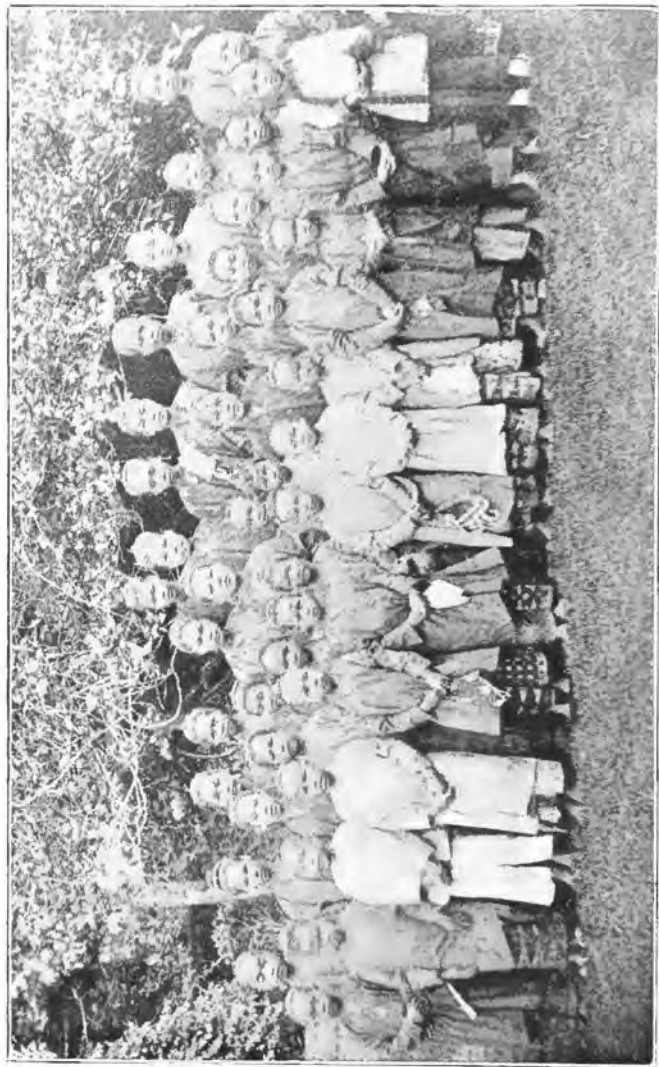
till July, and then she only seemed to be suffering from weakness. She was quite bright and happy, though she said, "Miss, I am very weak." When I left I said, "I must go, dear Anleang, but your Saviour will be with you always." She looked very bright, and said, "Yes, miss." Next day, Sunday, after great suffering for two hours, she died. Hers had been a *speaking* life, for it was known to all that she belonged to Jesus. Her little girl of three years old is with us, and often reminds us of her Saviour.'

No such certain brightness illumined the death of poor Benio—Benio who had had so many disadvantages, being taken early from school and married to a heathen. She came back at one time to the school as monitor, but left secretly, and only returned to ask for help when dangerously ill. Still, amid all her inconsistencies Miss Cooke could say, 'I believe she loved Jesus, and in her illness she seemed to find comfort in one of our favourite hymns, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!"'

Wonderful religion of ours, that calls our feeble women from the very depths of idolatry and misery, enables them to live such lovely lives, and to die such fearless and blessed deaths!

The circle of influences gradually widened. In 1868 Keychae was married to a good Christian Chinaman, who had been practising as a doctor in Batavia. After a perilous voyage, so lengthy that grave fears were entertained for their safety, they arrived in China, and then she at once began to work for her Lord. This was not the only, or indeed the first, link between the Singapore school and the Celestial Land.

One of the first members of the London committee was Miss Aldersey, who soon after joining it was able to carry out her cherished wish to work in the East, and



CHINESE SCHOOL-CHILDREN.

making a short stay in Singapore, she carried off two girls thence to her new home at Ningpo.

These two commenced and long carried on a correspondence with their early schoolfellows, and a mutual interest was felt by all engaged in either mission.

Sometimes a Christian Chinaman would come to Singapore to seek a wife from amongst Miss Cooke's girls, one, perhaps, who seemed to realize the old Hindoo poet's description of Women :

- ' Our love these sweetly-speaking women gain ;
 When men are all alone, companions bright ;
 In duty wise to judge and guide aright ;
 Kind tender mothers in distress and pain.
- ' The wife is half the man, his priceless friend,
 Of pleasure, virtue, wealth, his constant source ;
 A help and stay along his earthly course
 Through life unchanging—yea, beyond the end.'

Or, to use the words of Solomon, of these Christian wives it might be said : ' The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.'

As the elder girls moved off, there were others ready to take their places, and many of whose names were written as deeply in the teachers' hearts as those of Haneo, or Anleang, or Tempang. Time would fail to tell of all ; the details of the lives already given may serve as samples of the rest. There was Ah-tu, picked up, like a dropped wild-flower, from a drain, who grew up a good, useful girl ; Kim, Loan, and Inn, all three helpful teachers ; Seenio and Ah-Hong, married Christians, doing their work amongst their country-people ; and Yan, whose history was a lesson not to despair of anyone. For she was a girl who gave much trouble in the school, and years elapsed before her heart seemed touched by the Holy Spirit, and Miss Cooke was able to rejoice in her

conversion. She married a native who professed to be a Christian, but whose profession proved only nominal; he took her away to China, and broke off all intercourse with her Singapore friends. Their faith was long tried; no tidings came of Yan. But at last a missionary lady at Shanghai received a visit from her. Yan had overheard a child singing 'Happy Land,' and from her ascertained where she could find a Christian friend.

'I was exceedingly pleased,' wrote Mrs. Muirhead, 'with Mrs. Yan's manner; she at once made me feel she was a true Christian, and she assured me with tears that it was not so much the shame and sorrow her husband was bringing upon her, as the dishonour upon the Christian name, which she felt. Her house is a pattern of neatness, and she keeps her children beautifully clean.'

Amongst the many Christians of eminence who from time to time visited Singapore was one whose singular zeal, courage, and sympathy in every good work made him a most welcome and helpful visitor at Miss Cooke's house, Major Malan. In the pages of the *Female Missionary Intelligencer* he bore witness to the good she was doing.

'I remember,' he wrote, 'daily these dear girls in prayer as my sisters. The only thing I could do to show them my interest was to study with them the Word of God. This I did with great pleasure, the greater because they knew their Bibles so well in English that it was very easy to search the Scriptures with them. My Lord's Day evenings with them were, indeed, the resting and the starting point for the week for me.'

'But it is not only for the Christian instruction here given that the school is worthy of all support. As a training home for Christian wives it is an invaluable

support to missionary work among the Chinese, and a blessing beyond all value to the Christian Chinese themselves. How great a blessing it will have proved may not be known until the day declares it. The influence of this school in Singapore is much greater than can be believed by those who support it in England.

'To dear Miss Cooke and to her fellow-labourers—Miss Ryan and Miss Houston—every missionary who has ever visited the school will owe under God thanks for the encouragement and strengthening of faith such visit has given. In this respect alone the school has been a great blessing.'

In 1866, circumstances having led Miss Cooke to endeavour to trace out all the girls who had left her school, she reported with gratitude that out of 150 she had found only four who had not done well, and they had never made any profession of Christianity.

But from all this busy work and joyous progress failing health twice over compelled Miss Cooke to come to England on furlough. She arrived in the autumn of 1869, but was not well enough to meet the committee till May 19, 1870.

She returned to Singapore early in 1871, but was again compelled to leave the island in June, 1872. In January, 1875, she was at her post again, refreshed and strengthened, and rejoicing like a mother to be in the midst of her children once more.

CHAPTER V.

MISSION WORK IN CHINA.

'None but Christ in the way of salvation.

'None but Christ in daily life.

'Thus we go on our way rejoicing, looking unto Christ Jesus, as our Guide, our Strength, our Comfort, and our All.

'When we look up to Jesus, we meet His loving eyes looking down on us.'—SOPHIA COOKE.

THE connection of Miss Cooke's school with mission work in the Fuhkien province of China grew rapidly in interest and importance. When Keychae went to China with her husband in 1869, and they were both nearly lost on the way, Miss Cooke little thought this was but the beginning of the share the Singapore school would have in spreading the Gospel in China and elsewhere. Keychae did her best to work for her Lord in her new residence, and the committee hoped that some of the blessing that had been so richly bestowed on the Singapore school would be vouchsafed to her also. This hope was indeed realized, and truly a tenfold blessing has rested on the young missionaries trained by Miss Cooke, in accordance with her wise principle that every Christian should be a worker for Christ.

In 1876 another bright, promising young Christian left the loved Singapore home for mission work; but

this time the destination, though not the people among whom she was to labour, was different. Kim had been a faithful teacher and assistant in the school for ten years, and was a 'consistent, diligent Christian, very well suited to be a missionary's wife.' She married a Christian Chinaman, named James Ah Ling, who had originally been a gold-digger, but after his conversion to Christianity had laboured as an evangelist amongst his own people with so much acceptance that, poor as they were, they built him a little chapel up the country, costing £50. Subsequently he went to Melbourne to work among the Chinese there. No more important sphere could have fallen to his lot, for if ever the difficulties between colonials and the Chinese can be solved, it will be by Christianity, which unites men of all nations in the service of the King of kings. His young wife proved an efficient helper to him in all his labours, and he has long been the pastor of a Chinese congregation in Melbourne.

Does the reader remember the sudden addition to the family in the Singapore school of five little waifs, varying from three to six years old, brought to Miss Cooke by the police in 1858? In writing home to the committee about them, she used these words:

'Should missionaries be needed ten or twelve years hence, I believe these infants, if spared, may be chief workers in the school. I hope all friends at home will realize that they are their own children, and therefore pray much that they may be early taught to know and love the Saviour.'

Perhaps the 'friends at home' did 'pray much.' We may be sure that Miss Cooke did so; and now, as more than the ten or twelve years had rolled by, we seem to hear again the voice of the Master saying to this believing

woman, 'Oh, woman, great is thy faith! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.' For truly it came to pass as she had desired.

One of the five waifs, Jin Neo, or Charity, died peacefully, trusting in Christ, in 1877.

'Between 10 and 11 p.m.,' wrote kind Lady Ord, wife of the Governor of Singapore, who had promised to visit the school in Miss Cooke's absence in England, 'Jin was taken from us. It was a case of decided cholera. Four girls were left to help Miss Ryan in nursing her. Everything that skill could devise was done for the poor sufferer. It would have refreshed your heart to see the girls—calm, quiet, helpful, active, thoughtful. I really never saw anything more beautiful than their whole behaviour, and their nursing nothing could surpass. But God had willed to take her to Himself. Before night she was gone, with the name of the Lord Jesus upon her lips.'

Thus one of the much-prayed for waifs 'ran on before,' and early reached the everlasting home. The other four grew up steady Christian girls, became 'chief workers in the school,' and then, as God is wont to exceed our petitions, they all became missionaries in China, as wives of native catechists. It is imperative in that country for women to be married, and usually a girl does not see or know her husband till they are united. But these marriages were truly happy, as in each case man and wife were united in Christian faith. We have a glimpse of them in 1880, described by Miss Houston :

'Inn is working with her husband in Key Chang, about a week's journey from Foochow. She seems to have acquired the dialect well, and she states that she is invited daily by numbers of women to whom she reads.

'Tien (Patience) and her husband are stationed at Hok

Chiang, and all her powers and energies are being taxed to their fullest extent that she may the more quickly acquire the dialect of the number of women who flock to see her. Choon's (Hope's) husband is labouring at Tong Ah, about a day's journey from Foochow. I was rejoiced to see how wide a sphere of usefulness is opened to this excellent young missionary.

'Sien (or Faith) was placed, ten days' journey from Foochow, at Siong Chie, where there had been much persecution and opposition to Christianity. She did her utmost to acquire the language, and longed to be able to tell her turbulent neighbours of Him who came to bring peace on earth, but it was not so to be. 'The Lord called her to Himself in September.'

Amongst the pet treasures of the Singapore school was Ah-tu, who when a baby was picked up by a policeman from a drain, and brought to Miss Cooke, who received her with open arms. Her clothes showed that she belonged to well-to-do people; but the poor little thing had fallen sick, and, as usual amongst the Chinese in such circumstances, her mother had thrown her away. In spite of such an unpromising beginning of life, Ah-tu grew up strong, healthy, and comely. The ladies of Huddersfield paid for her support, and she proved well worthy of their generosity. She became the pride and darling of the school, and certainly had plenty of that sunshine of love and happiness around her which is the greatest blessing to childhood. Now she, too, was surrendered by the kind teacher who had been more than a mother, given freely to the work of the Lord. It was not without a pang that Miss Cooke parted from her girls for China. She was growing old, she had come to those years when the heart clings tenderly to the children it has sheltered; but she knew the privilege of giving to Christ that which is most

costly—the alabaster boxes of great price. Very pathetic were these words of hers on one such occasion :

‘ My dear girls were very sweet, loving, and humble, and it tore my heart to part from them. We are much in prayer for them that it may be seen in the ship that they belong to Jesus. They left in grateful spirits, so trustful, not knowing what might befall them.’

It was not only from her girls Miss Cooke generously parted. She gave up first Miss Houston, and subsequently Miss Foster, to go to Foochow. Miss Houston was always a most pleasant fellow-worker, and it was she who carried out Miss Cooke’s loved scheme of establishing ragged schools for the Chinese. She was eminently lovable, gentle, and helpful.

‘ It will be a great trial to all of us,’ wrote Miss Cooke, ‘ to part with Miss Houston, but we must not be selfish. She has been permitted to do a good work here, and we hope in Foochow she will have a larger sphere of labour.’

Miss Houston was soon hard at work at Foochow, superintending the Chinese Girls’ School, and training the young Singapore girl-workers for Bible-women. Inn was especially helpful to her, and was chosen, after a few years’ experience, to go with her husband to Corea when that new sphere was open for missionaries. They were accompanied by another Chinese missionary and his wife, the latter of whom had been a school-fellow of Inn at Singapore. These two young women were the first to take the Gospel to the women of Corea. This mission had to be relinquished in a few years, and the workers returned to Foochow. Inn’s husband was subsequently ordained, and he is working under the C.M.S. at Hok Chiang as pastor of their native church. A wonderful blessing has been granted to the labours of this excellent man and his devoted wife, and the society which employs

him, and the Female Education Society that trained her, rejoice together over the revival which has taken place in that city, where, as in other stations in the Fuhkien province, 'the blood of the martyrs' is proving to be 'the seed of the Church.'

It was not always safe or easy work at Foochow. In October, 1879, a ruffianly attack was made by the Chinese on the mission houses. The house of Mr. Stewart* was entered by a mob of about fifty desperate-looking vagabonds bent on mischief. They assaulted and severely injured Mr. Wolfe, a C.M.S. missionary; roamed through the grounds, destroying everything that they could lay their hands on; took down the doors and venetians, carried off beds and furniture, and finally set fire to two houses and burnt them down. It was a fearful night for Miss Houston and her young helpers and schoolgirls.

'The Chinese soldiers,' she related in a letter written immediately afterwards to Miss Cooke, 'saved my house and the school from sharing the same fate, and it still stands with only a few damages. I cannot write to you all about it; it seems all like a dreadful confused dream. Thank God! no lives are lost. Inn and Chitneo are safe and well. I was very full of fears for Chitneo, but nothing has happened, and she hopes to go home soon. This last trial seems to have added ten years to my age. We fear it will end in our being turned out of the city, and that will be the very worst thing for our mission work; but God knows, and if we are turned out, I shall feel that it is His will concerning us.'

The ladies and schoolgirls were compelled to escape through a back-door from the mob, but reached the public street in safety. They were kindly treated by the people, and brought in safety to Nantai. It is probable

* Afterwards murdered at Whysang.

that this alarming incident affected Miss Houston's health permanently, for in the following year she was taken ill. A visit to Singapore failing to restore her, she was compelled to return to England, where she arrived on April 30, 1880. She was lovingly welcomed, and tenderly nursed by Christian friends, but nothing could restore her failing strength. In July she entered Mrs. Pennefather's Home for Invalid Ladies at Mildmay, of which she often said that it was to her 'the very gate of heaven.' It was a trial to her active spirit to lie so long, as it seemed to her useless; but she was told that she was evidently sent there to cheer and strengthen the hearts of the workers, and with that she was content to wait and suffer.

'Do Thou Thy holy will ;
I will lie still.'

Her last message to the girls in the Singapore school was: 'Give them my love, and tell them I am very happy.'

One of her last words to a friend was: 'I fear no evil.'

The day closed, and night came on, but her peace still flowed as a river. At about eleven she requested to be laid on her side. A bright smile lighted up her face, and one of the ladies present, observing that her lips moved, bent down to catch the words. 'He is come,' was all she could hear, and so gently did the loving Father take His faithful servant home that the exact moment of her spirit's departure was not known.

'We give Thee hearty thanks for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our sister out of this sinful world.'

A special interest attaches to the story of Chitneo, incidentally mentioned by Miss Houston as one of those who shared with her the horrors of that October night, for from early years she seems to have been marked out by the providence of God for future usefulness. She was

admitted into the Girls' School, Singapore, in March, 1865, having lost both her parents through cholera within a few days of each other. Soon after she came to school, her eldest brother, a coolie, was killed by another man. These trials made Chitneo very thoughtful and sad; but, hearing of the love of the Lord Jesus, she sought and found comfort in Him, and she entreated her younger brother to seek the Saviour too, but he would not, and told her not to bring shame on her relations by becoming a Christian. At the beginning of the year 1866 she learnt, as her text for the day, 'Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen' (Rev. i. 7). This verse made a deep impression on her mind, and she asked if she might be baptized at once, as she wished to get ready for the coming of the Lord, and when told she would have to suffer much from her relations if she were baptized, she replied, 'Yes, miss, I know; I can bear it all. I must take care of my soul.'

Accordingly, her aunt and other relations were sent for, and Chitneo 'went forward unflinchingly, and told them she must follow the Lord Jesus. Their curses and cruel behaviour did not move her; she remained as firm as possible, telling them she would always love them all, and would pray that they might learn to love the Lord Jesus, too. She was baptized on February 7. She is only twelve years old, and has learnt to read the Bible during the short time she has been at school. Her relations are very poor, and besides that they disown her now. Our school funds are very low: will any friends come forward to support her?'

This query was answered in a most satisfactory manner, and it is extremely interesting to know that 'A. L. O. E.'

was the one who came forward and promised the requisite annual sum.

In 1875 Miss Cooke was able to report as follows of Chitneo:

‘When twelve years old she gave her heart to God, and it cheers us to see how she has grown in grace ever since, and is now one of our most useful workers.’

In 1876 Chitneo married an ordained Chinese missionary, belonging to the C.M.S., but after about two happy years together he died, leaving her with a little boy.

This was heavy sorrow indeed, but He who sent it enabled her to bear it, and she has continued her work as a Bible-woman ever since. During the war in 1885, she went about the villages comforting the poor women whose relatives were exposed to danger or who had fallen in battle. Latterly she has been listened to when addressing large numbers of heathen. Let us pray that she may be given grace to persevere in her Christian course to the end.*

A remarkable proof of the estimation in which the Singapore workers were held by the C.M.S. was given in 1878, when Archdeacon Wolfe wrote to Miss Cooke, urging her to send Miss Foster, her then helper, to Foochow, and three or four more of her Chinese girls. Perhaps Miss Webb, the Secretary of the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East (who has completed more than fifty years in its service), has rarely received a more gratifying communication than she did on August 1 in that year. The minutes record that ‘a letter was read from the Rev. H. Wright, the Hon. Secretary of the C.M.S., stating that if her committee see their way to concur in Mr. Wolfe’s request, and thus strengthen the Foochow Mission, the committee

She is now working in connection with the C.M.S.

of the C.M.S. will grant the sum of £120 towards the expenses involved in the plan.'

The proposition was agreed to, and acted upon without delay.

The young women sent to Foochow boarded at the C.M.S. girls' school until they married, and there received all the help they required in learning the difficult Chinese language.

The spirit in which Miss Cooke had trained her girls to go forth to mission-work is shown in the following extracts from the letters of two of them.

'I am only,' writes one, 'waiting for God's command to guide me in everything; as the hymn says:

" Anywhere with Jesus, though He please to bring
 Into fires the fiercest, into suffering;
 Though He bid me work, or wait, or only bear for Him,
 'Anywhere for Jesus' still shall be my hymn."

Another wrote: 'I am very sorry to leave you, Miss Ryan, and all my friends in Singapore, but it is the Lord's will for me to go to China, and to do His work there. I always feel I want to give up myself entirely to work for the Lord.'

The Chinese do not approve of very young married women visiting about much, but as they grow a little older, and also attain fluency in the language, they are welcomed almost everywhere as Bible-women.*

In this character their spiritual work is twofold: to tell 'the old, old story of Jesus and His love' to those who have never yet heard it; and to encourage and stir up native Christians. If in England, surrounded by so many privileges, we are apt to grow lukewarm, can we

* 'Some of the Bible-women find it very difficult to get about much with their tiny feet; for, though they usually unbind them when they become Christians, they are, of course, much crippled, having been bound in infancy.'

wonder that converts surrounded by the heathen should do so ?

‘The whole native Church is characterized by want of burning zeal,’ wrote one female missionary. ‘Please ask the ladies to pray daily specially for those who have long been Christians.’

‘Are we holding forth the Word of Life to workers in the distance ?
Are we telling of His love who calls the tempest-tossed to Him ?
Father of lights ! to Thee we pray, now grant us Thy assistance ;
Keep Thou our hearts from failing, and our lamps from burning
dim.’

A few short extracts from Chitneo’s diary* will illustrate the double aspect of a Bible-woman’s work to win and to build up souls in the faith.

Holiday Visiting at Hok Chiang, 1889.

‘I had a prayer-meeting with the catechist’s wife, the Bible-woman, and several of the Christian women, about twenty, who were able to come. I asked them some questions which they knew very little. I felt so sad to see these women—Christian, though they know how to worship God, but I am afraid many of them are very ignorant, and very few that can read. I think they all need to be stirred up ; they are just like sleeping. I hope by-and-by they may be brought to know the Lord Jesus more, and to serve Him better.

‘A woman was dismissed from the church. I met her on my way to visit the Christian women. She came out from her house to see me. I talked to her, and asked her why she did not go to church. She smiled, and said, “No.” I said, “I am very sorry indeed ; how could you go away from such a loving Father, who is always so loving and waiting to receive us ?” I said, “I hope you

* From the *Female Missionary Intelligencer*.

will come to church next Sunday." So she did come, and never misses one Sunday. I think that shows that she is quite repented of her sins. I am so thankful that she has come back to her loving Saviour again. We commend her into the care of our dear Heavenly Father, who is able to keep her.'

From Hong-Ah to Tong Kang.

'Stayed there a fortnight. I enjoyed my visitings and Sundays all the places I went. All the Christian men and women liked to hear me play my accordion. I played "Jesus loves me," "The Great Physician now is near," "When He cometh," and several other hymns, in Chinese. They seemed quite pleased, and never tired of it.

'It is very sad to see these Christian women, so many of them don't know how to read; even the men can't read. They work very hard in their fields to get their food; they feel as though they can't get time for anything else.

'Also I went to Sang-an, and stayed five days. My little boy and girl helped me with the singing all the places that I went. The Chinese are quite surprised to see my children could sing. They thought they were very wise and clever children. They could see the difference between heathen and Christian children. "Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children." I went to all the places in about six weeks, and then returned to Foochow. May God bless the seed which has been sown into their hearts! "So shall My word be that goeth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void."'

Another Visit to Hok Chiang, January, 1890.

'Saturday Morning.—Men and women, more than one hundred, came in. While Miss Davis played her con-

certina, we sang "Jesus loves me," etc. Then I stood up and spoke to the people; they were so quiet and very attentive. I talked to them nearly all the morning, and then, going to a village called Lieng-cho, Miss Davis played: a great congregation came, men and women; I talked to them, they all listening. I felt so thankful that God has given me help and strength to talk to the hundreds of people without their saying anything against me. My heart was burning within me when I saw hundreds of people; they are like sheep without a shepherd. We are sure God sent us to these people, as we have been praying about it; and He gave us fine weather, too, that we could go, so we praise the Lord for this. We pray God to enlighten their dark eyes and hearts, and to breathe on these dry bones that they may live.

' *Sunday Evening*.—Miss Davis played some hymns for the Chinese. Many women, both heathen and Christian, were present. After that I thought I had better say a few words to them. I spoke to them about Christ knocking at the door of their hearts. I said, "He is standing outside waiting to come in to-night if you would just open the door. He cannot go in if the door is shut. . . ."

' I heard—one of the Christian women told me—that three new women came to Christ now since we visited them. Halleluia! I noticed several of them very attentive, and took every word I said, and so quiet, too.

' *Monday*.—Went to Chang Tan. Miss Davis played her concertina. Many men, but few women, came. I spoke to them, but they not seem much like to hear; they like to hear the concertina more than the preaching.

' *Wednesday*.—Kangbeng. The Christians are very nice and earnest. We examined them; they answered very well, some of them.

'*Friday*.—We went to Deng Gang ; found a room very dirty where we had to sleep. We were obliged to clean it. Some of the people quite surprised, and said how clean we were. We hoped they would learn to be clean. We saw three Malay women. I talked to them in their dialect, in Malay, about Christ ; they were quite delighted to hear someone who could talk their dialect.

'We want to pray very very much for these people ; we cannot know their state and their need unless we go round and see them. They are quite miserable and perishing, just like the dry bones. Oh, may the Holy Spirit of God breathe upon them that they may live !'

With what deep thankfulness must Miss Cooke have welcomed every successive report of the consistent lives and zealous labours of her former scholars ! She must have felt indeed that she had not spent her strength for naught. When once a single man or woman is converted, who can reckon the amount of good which will be the result ? From each true child of God should flow 'rivers of living water,' for each is called not only to be blessed, but to be a blessing to others.

CHAPTER VI.

LAST YEARS.

'And even to old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs I will carry you.'—ISA. l. 4.

'If life be long, I will be glad
That I may long obey.'—BONAR.

'A time to die.'—ECCLES. iii. 2.

'To depart and be with Christ, which is very far better.'—PHIL. i. 23 (R.V.).

'Oh, just when Thou shalt please would I depart,
My Father and my God! I would not choose,
Even if I might, the moment to unloose
The bands which bind my weak and worthless heart
From its high home. So that I have a part,
However humble, there, it matters not
Or long or short my pilgrimage; my lot
Joyful or joyless; if the flowers may start
Where'er I tread, or thorns obstruct my path.
I look not at the present; many years
Are but so many moments, though of tears.
My soul's bright home a lovelier aspect hath;
And if it surely, surely shall be mine, and then
For ever mine—it matters little WHEN.'

THEODOSIA BARKER.

WHILE some of Miss Cooke's former scholars were thus actively and usefully employed in China, others, who had the advantage of her personal superintendence, were equally zealous at Singapore. Their journals also contain graphic accounts of their work and of those whom they visited, as the notes already read. A few extracts will repay perusal:

' *May 2, 1881.*—B. L. and I visited four houses. We found an old woman who could not understand Malay, so B. spoke to her in Chinese about her soul.

' *May 16.*—Visited one of our girls' mothers. I taught her to read another verse, and heard her repeat some hymns which she had learnt herself without any mistake. Then we gathered the little family together, read and prayed with them, and spoke about Christ's love to us, and that they must love Him while still young; they must also learn to pray to Him, and not to their idols, for they neither see nor hear. Our God is very different. He made us, and He knows all about us.

' *May 27.*—B. L. entreated G.'s mother very earnestly to leave off her bad ways and think about her soul. She cried, and said she always prayed morning and night. So we told her prayers would be of no use if she went on doing what was not right. David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. lxvi. 18).

' *June 25.*—We found the old woman we visited before in bed, looking very poorly. She said how she longed to see us, and hear again about the Lord Jesus. I read to her about the woman of Samaria—how the Lord, tired and thirsty, sat on the well, and asked some water of the woman; instead of giving Him at once, she asked Him some questions. The old woman said, "Oh, how hard-hearted she was, not to have given the Lord Jesus at once some water to drink!" Then we told her that our hearts are just the same. When He asked us to give Him our hearts, how unwilling we are to give them! But how differently He acts towards us! He has not only given us all things that we have, He died for us; and if we go to Him, He will pardon and forgive us our sins. Then she said, with tears in her eyes, "Oh, this is

the first time that I have heard about this Lord Jesus! From my childhood I have heard about God, but not that this Jesus died for my sins. I do believe in Him, and I do love Him. I will lie low at His feet. Oh, if I might but touch the hem of His garment!" "Yes," I said, "go to Him; you may touch His garment by faith. He is ready with wide-spreading arms to receive you, and He will be a Father to you, and you shall be His child." "Oh, not His child! If only I might be His servant." We spoke to her a little longer, and she asked us to pray for her, and to come some day soon to comfort her, that her faith might be strengthened. B. and I feel so thankful to God that He has heard our prayers in turning the heart of this woman to Himself.

' 1886.—We visited an old pupil. We have been a long way this morning—about five miles into the country. We asked her how it was with her soul, and if she read her Bible at all. "No, I have no time to read it; my husband is ill, and I am *swallowed up with trouble*." How like are human hearts everywhere! How apt we are to allow ourselves to be *swallowed up with trouble*, instead of by faith rising over the crest of the waves, and walking with Christ on the water!

' *September*, 1887.—We went to see an old Chinese Christian woman, ninety-three years of age, and the only one who believes in the Lord Jesus in a household which consists of a daughter, a son-in-law, and five grown-up grandchildren. It is really very wonderful to see her faith and love to the Saviour. When asked if she thinks of the Lord Jesus, and if the Lord was with her, her answer was, "Ah yes! night and day I am thinking of Him. He is always with me." One day a woman said, "Let us listen to her; she is going to read a fable."

Then I said, "It is not a fable, but a true story about Jesus, the Son of God, and about His love."

'On another occasion a woman said, "I think I am going to throw away my idols; I do not want to worship them any more—I do not believe in them. I am going to pray to the Lord Jesus; I want to trust in Him only."

'We usually hear the religion of the Chinese described as a worship of their ancestors; but in addition to this cult the common people worship any number of idols, in whose power they implicitly believe, and whom they propitiate with offerings. The chief favourite amongst these is Su Meng Kong, the God of the Kitchen, and none would dare to set up housekeeping without him. His birthday is the fourteenth day of the seventh month, and on that day every family worships him, each in their own house.

'The faith and patience of some of these Singapore Christians were very beautiful. One poor woman was obliged to go to the General Hospital, and there, in the midst of doctors and nurses, she "shone for Jesus." The doctor reminded her that she might die under the operation he was about to perform. "Yes," she said, "I know it; but my soul is safe in Jesus, so I have no fear;" and before taking the chloroform she lifted her hands and heart, commending her soul to the Saviour. The operation was wonderfully successful, and she was full of thankfulness to her Lord.

'The sorrow of one sick woman because she had given way to irritability was very touching: "O Lord God! O Lord Jesus!" she cried, "*do forgive me!*"

We can imagine with what delight the young Bible-women related their experiences to Miss Cooke, and what a help and privilege it was to receive her sympathy and counsel about each case met with.

Some visitor to Singapore wrote a very pleasing account of Miss Cooke's married girls in the *Christian*.

'Sometimes,' he wrote, 'these elder girls married, and are drafted to mission-fields in China; others, with their husbands, settle in shops in the town. We visited some of these homes, and were surprised and pleased to see how pure they seemed. In every one was a small room or recess set apart for the worship of God, the large family Bible on the table, and texts hung on the walls around. We learned that the children never went to school, nor to daily work, without gathering in this spot for reading and prayer. Old and present pupils look on Miss Cooke with eyes of love, as indeed they may, for she treats them all as one big family.'

'The decided Christians among the boarders have quite a mission-field of their own. No native ever comes to the house without being faithfully spoken to by them.'

'Miss Cooke has formed a branch of the Y.W.C.A., which they have joined. The married girls come to the monthly meeting, bringing reports of their little mission work, in some cases only the reading of a text to a friend who has dropped in.'

'Some of them carried on the ragged schools till the failure of funds, and the opening of a Board school in the town, but not before hundreds of children had learnt in them the story of the Gospel.'

Meanwhile, the ordinary school-life went on from year to year with steady continuity and a never-failing number of boarders. As in a garden the flower-beds may repeat themselves year after year—fresh roses, geraniums, carnations, lilies, fill the same spots as in the previous years—so under Miss Cooke's watchful eye might be seen one little band after another of happy intelligent children taking as they grew up the places and duties of the older

girls, who had left the home for married and perhaps missionary life. It was, in fact, a valuable nursery for rearing Christian workers. 'Indeed,' observed Miss Cooke, 'we have no idle hands here; all our Christians are working for the Lord.'

We cannot wonder that a colonial chaplain in Singapore pronounced the school 'the most practically useful of the works which goes on in the town.'

'The only bright spot in Singapore!' was the enthusiastic exclamation of another visitor.

But dearly as Miss Cooke loved the children's school, her sympathies flowed out in the many directions beyond them. Any young person who needed a friend found one in her. Hearing of a Eurasian girl whose only home was with a native woman of bad character, her pity was at once aroused.

'A voice,' she told people afterwards, 'seemed to say to me, "I came to seek and save them that are lost." I felt I must do something for her, and, as I looked up for further guidance, I felt sure it would be a case for the Y.W.C.A.; so I put it before our Christian girls, and allowed them to invite L. here. We trust the Lord is blessing the means used to lead her to Jesus.'

The annual expense of the Singapore school was £700, nor can this be considered an extravagant sum when we consider that the house was large enough to contain some forty girls and children, besides Miss Cooke and her one or two assistants. While the London society furnished Miss Cooke's salary, they were very anxious that the money to support the school should be raised as much as possible on the spot. The girls and many of Miss Cooke's friends in Singapore worked for the two sales which occurred every year, but they were mainly depended on the boxes of work sent from England. These were

sent yearly to Miss Cooke from Edinburgh, Edgbaston, Cheltenham, Leamington, Perry Barr, and some few other places, and the articles sent being always thoroughly good and suitable, they commanded a steady sale to the English residents at Singapore. These sales were always conducted in a quiet, business-like manner, Miss Cooke never allowing lotteries nor anything that could by anyone be considered inconsistent with her Christian principles.

Sometimes the amounts realized might vary a little, or the contributions towards the support of special children would fail. These were at first seasons of anxious thought to Miss Cooke, but she soon learnt to be 'careful for nothing,' 'confident,' as she said, that 'my friends will not forget me, and that "Jehovah Jireh" (God will provide) is a strong staff to lean on, quieting every anxiety that arises.' Her experience tallied with that of one of the missionaries in Uganda.

'I have learnt,' wrote the Rev. E. Millar, 'one lesson at least in this country, and that is the wondrous care of our Heavenly Father in the very small things of daily life, and the truth that all things work together for good to those that love God.'

As Miss Ryan carried on the household management and the daily lessons, Miss Cooke had leisure to look around and find other fields of usefulness. Writing home in 1875, she mentioned that she had four Bible readings amongst her own countrymen, and one also for English-speaking Chinese. At these she made use of Moody's lessons and Sankey's hymns, her girls forming her choir.

In 1882 she found an opening for work among some Jewesses.

'Our task is not easy,' she wrote, 'as conversation

has to be carried on in four different languages: Malay, Arabic, Hebrew and English. They are very ignorant, cannot read, and never pray.'

She took deep interest in the two hospitals of Singapore, the General and the Military Hospital, and visiting the sick there frequently. In this work she allowed her young people to have a share. 'They prepare bouquets and texts for me, and help in all I need, such as pillows, etc.'

The lovely garden of the school was laid under contribution in many ways. The young ladies who occasionally undertook to read to the girls at their sewing were always presented with dainty little nosegays on leaving. The choicest flowers found their way to many an invalid lady or poor woman, while, as just mentioned, they were always freely supplied to the patients in the hospital wards. It might almost have been called a consecrated garden, so freely was it used for others. It is so sweet to the Christian to bring an offering to the Lord from all he has; not to tithe the mint and cumin as a tax, but with spontaneous love to feel that the happiest use of everything is in the service of the Master.

She took great interest in soldiers and sailors, and in policemen, and for many years herself held Bible-classes for them, upon which much blessing seemed to rest; for she never lowered her aim, but sought the spiritual good of all with whom she came in contact, directing them always to the Lord Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Thus, her life flowed on in a full stream of usefulness year after year; but as age advanced she suffered more from the climate, and had to make more frequent visits to England. Yet to others Time seemed to touch her with but a very gentle hand. A clergyman who visited

her in 1878 was much impressed with her appearance of health and strength.

'We were shown,' he wrote, 'into a delightful drawing-room, and Miss Cooke soon appeared—a spirited woman, with no signs whatever of the enervation and weariness produced by long residence in a hot climate, but as robust, lively, intelligent, and bright, as if her days had been spent in bracing England.'

Her appearance must have been rather deceptive, for not long after this visit she was obliged to leave Singapore, and go to England, 'not expecting,' as she herself said, 'to return.' Her eyesight seemed failing and her strength quite broken down. However, in our climate she wonderfully recovered, and in August, 1881, she sailed away from England again, and reached Singapore on October 6, glad indeed to resume all her old occupations once more. In 1888 she had a severe attack of acute rheumatism, and her health was reported to be so precarious that Miss Johnstone, of Hong Kong, was asked to hold herself ready to proceed to Singapore at once in case of any emergency. But the sufferer revived, and bravely took up her work again. She was cheered by a very interesting account of good being done at Sumatra by a former pupil, and in the following year she had the pleasure of receiving a very kind visit from the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, who inspected the school with much interest.

In 1893 she came to England again, bringing one of her Chinese young women with her, as it was felt that in her state of health she should not travel alone. She visited several dear and old friends at Leamington and elsewhere, and again her strength and energy revived, and she desired once more to return to her beloved Singapore. She said she should stay there about two years longer, and then come home and rest. A farewell

meeting was held for her and some others in the Lower Room at Exeter Hall, Mr. Eugene Stock presiding. It was the last. She sailed on December 28, 1893, reached Singapore safely, received a warm and joyful welcome from her faithful friend and coadjutor, Miss Ryan, and soon settled down to work again. But though, 'by reason of strength,' she was approaching fourscore years of age, she now suffered much from the heat. 'Her writing had to be done generally with wet bandages on her forehead.'

In June, 1894, she wrote as follows to one of her dearest friends at Leamington:

'MY DEAR FRIEND,

'I am so glad to receive your precious letter, to have seen you in such improved health in your sweet home. It is so pleasant to picture you in your pretty room, and enjoying your chair-journey to our dear friends at Clent House. I trust we often meet in spirit; we remember all our dear friends every morning, especially all at Leamington.

'Our school is now very full—forty-nine—so many lambs to feed for Him; and I am so thankful also to enjoy still working amongst my own countrymen.

'Monday evenings English friends meet here for Bible-reading.

'Tuesday mornings are spent at the General Hospital, where I meet people of all nations, flowers and texts being prepared for me by my dear Chinese girls.

'Wednesday morning I have a large class of Chinese young women, Christians, Bible-reading; and in the evening I have a class for girls at the Institute.

'Thursday evening, Bible-reading for policemen at their own barracks.

'Friday, general visiting and inspecting school things.

‘ Saturday—morning, busy in various ways ; afternoon, receive visitors ; evening, a Bible-class for sailors.

‘ Will you sometimes, dear friends, remember all in prayer ? I am so thankful our loving Lord will use one so weak, the least of all. Will you ask that I may be more completely consecrated to His service, and live only for His glory ? I am so thankful for my visit to my own dear relations and friends and country ; I feel so much brighter, and, though separate in the flesh, I am with you. We are just hoping for the arrival of our Leamington box. We are very anxious about our friends at Hong Kong.* Great care is taken here. Ships are in quarantine, and the whole place is well cared for, and we are praying that the Lord will be a wall of fire around us. How blessed to be safe in Him ! Now, dear Miss L., I must close this selfish epistle.

‘ With much love,

‘ Yours very affectionately,

‘ SOPHIA COOKE.’

The tale of daily engagements is assuredly sufficiently full for one who might now be termed ‘ Miss Cooke the aged.’

We think we may trace in the letter a Christian’s ripening spirit. It breathes not merely the indomitable zeal always characteristic of the writer, but also the gentleness, the sweetness, and the humility which so often appear like finishing touches in the character of experienced labourers in Christ’s vineyard.

Another year glided quietly by, and then the same dear friend received another letter—the last—from Miss Cooke :

* The plague being prevalent there.

' GOVERNMENT HILL, SINGAPORE,
' July 29, 1895.

' MY DEAREST MISS L.,

' How very dear and kind of you to write and tell me of the Borderland, where you found all so bright and peaceful, resting in the loving arms of our Saviour Lord Jesus! I can well believe you were almost sorry to be called back for a little while, but you heard a loving voice which said :

“ One little hour, and the glorious crowning,
The golden harp-strings and the victor's palm ;
One little hour, and then the ' Hallelujah !'
Eternity's long, deep, thanksgiving psalm.”

' That precious hymn of dear Mrs. Pennefather's has so often comforted me when I have been weary and sad. I love to think of you as I saw you in your own sweet little room with your good old nurse. We are all going on as usual. You will have heard that one of our dear girls has gone to China, wishing to work for Christ. She is to be in Chitnio's care while she learns the language. I will send you a photograph of her, asking that you will remember her in special prayer.

' I hope you are now enjoying the summer and all the lovely flowers, our Father's precious gifts. Geenio* and I often talk of home pleasures.

' With much love, dearest Miss L.,

' Your affectionate old friend,

' SOPHIA COOKE.'

The 'little hour' of waiting, for the Home call was nearly over for her! The simple story of her last days on earth may be given in the words of her friend Miss Ryan, conveying the tidings of her death to Miss Webb :

* Geenio had accompanied Miss Cooke to England.

September 16.

' It is with a sad heart that I write to tell you of the great loss we have sustained in the death of our dear friend, Miss Cooke. She left us to be for ever with the Lord on Saturday, September 14, at 5.30 in the morning, but our loss is her gain. She is now made most blessed for ever; she is made glad with the joy of His countenance, and we are comforted.

' Dear Miss Cooke was taken ill on Monday, August 26. After the first few days she seemed so much better that her thoughts turned to her loved ones again, but erysipelas making its appearance in her right leg, the doctors feared the very worst. It brought on very great suffering, and at such times she would say: "I do pray that this sickness and suffering may be to the glory of God;" and again: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." When a little relieved from pain, she would ask for hymns to be sung to her, choosing such ones as "Jesu, Lover of my soul," "Hark, my soul, it is the Lord." Indeed, we felt at such times that the sick-room was consecrated ground. Actual dying seemed far removed from her. Very often she would say, "When I get better, I shall have a lot to tell of God's dealings with me during this illness." And so it went on from day to day. Texts and hymns often soothed her to sleep. She indeed realized that the Everlasting Arms were underneath her. On Friday, the 13th, she said very distinctly, "Chinese Girls' School *all for Jesus*; Chinese Girls' School *all for Jesus*." God's glory seemed uppermost in her mind. Towards evening she asked that the little ones might sing "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide," falling asleep while the dear little tremulous voices sang the last verse. During the night we felt that the end was not far off, and towards the dawning of the

day she gently breathed her last, and entered into rest, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. We have felt it quite a pleasure to have ministered to her during her last days on earth, the more so as she said, "Oh, how good it is to be at home, to be cared for by all my dear ones!"

'The friends of the school have been most kind, but from the first she could not see anyone.

'Dear Miss Cooke had been ailing off and on for some time past, but now her work is done. She has entered into the joy of her Lord. We feel that the Lord is good, a Stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him.

'We will go on as we did during Miss Cooke's absence in England till we hear from you.

'I have been very much comforted and supported by our girls, especially dear Heiu; Geenio is comforted, too.'

Thus, the two who had worked so many years side by side were parted in presence, but not in spirit, for

'The saints above and those below
But one communion make.'

'Therefore, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify God,' looking forward to the day when all His redeemed children shall be gathered together to be for ever with the Lord.

In the evening of the day on which Miss Cooke was literally 'sung to sleep' by the Chinese girls she loved and cared for, her body was laid in the grave.

The funeral was very largely attended. Miss Ryan, the Chinese girls from her school, her former pupils and their families, the clergy of all the Protestant Churches,

members of the police force, soldiers from all branches of the service, and a large number of the general public, assembled round the grave. The Venerable Archdeacon Perham officiated, the coffin being carried to the grave by members of the police force. H.E. the Governor also sent his carriage.

On the following Sunday a memorial service was held, the Dead March in 'Saul' was played in the cathedral as a tribute to her memory, and thus with almost regal honour was this devoted worker laid in her grave,

' but to ripen there,
Till the last glorious morn.'

CHAPTER VII.

REMINISCENCES.

' Whose faith follow.'—HEB. xii. 7.

' Yes, like the fragrance that wanders in freshness
When the flowers that it came from are closed up and gone ;
So would I be to this world's weary dwellers,
Only remembered by what I have done.

' I need not be sad if another succeed me
To reap down those fields which in spring I have sown ;
He who ploughed and who sowed is not miss'd by the reaper,
He is only remembered by what he has done.'

H. BONAR.

WHEN Dorcas lay dead, all the widows stood by Peter weeping, and showing the coats and garments made ' while she was with them.'

We do not find that Peter reproved them for this, although he desired to be left alone to make a mighty prayer for her restoration to life. It cannot be wrong or useless to recall the loving looks, the good deeds, and the fair example of friends ' while they were with us,' if only we do not dare to use any hollow praise or untruthful exaggeration. To God alone is the praise due of ' whatsoever was lovely, whatsoever was of good report,' in them. We may learn much from the words, warm with love and gratitude, written about Miss Cooke after she left her earthly home. Most of the letters written add

some little graphic touch to her picture, or mention some incident of interest. Thus, the Rev. Mr. Cooke tells us that 'she had a strong natural dread of death, from which some of the best Christians are not always delivered. But though she knew she was dying, she did not want any to come and pray over her; she preferred to die, with her Chinese girls around her, alone with her Saviour.' The same friend describes her as 'having a perfect delight in doing good to others,' and says:

'Many in Singapore, and many in other parts of the world, will remember her many thoughtful kindnesses as long as they live. She was a Puritan and a Protestant, but she was also a believer in loving Evangelical truth, the great characteristic of which is the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Her house was the common meeting-place of all Christians whose system and belief did not place them fatally beyond the pale of communion with their brethren. She was a loyal daughter of the Church of England, but she held her views, and expressed them strongly, about certain systems and practices which she saw growing up in her beloved Church. But during the fourteen years I have known her intimately, I often heard her say very kind things of those from whom she greatly differed. She was very appreciative of all good work and workers, and many have been cheered by the kind and sympathetic way she made inquiry as to what was being done by them for their Master. She was wonderfully hopeful, too, of those of whom most others almost despaired, and often by her sheer generosity of faith in their better qualities won them at last. She made no pretensions to any great or exact scholarship—she was just an ordinary workaday missionary; but she has written her name most deeply in the hearts of many natives and Europeans, who feel and know they have lost

a mother in Israel. She was a woman of great force of character and strength of will; firm in friendships, affectionate, and kind. But, above all, her ruling passion was love to the Saviour; this was the inspiration and explanation of her whole life.'

Miss Ryan tells us how Miss Cooke was 'thorough in all she did, and all work she undertook she carried through, in spite of all difficulties. Latterly, her health was far from good, but she never allowed it to interfere with the work on which her heart was set. The watchword given by her to the Chinese girls was "Looking unto Jesus," and we trust it will ever continue the same.'

From another friend, Mr. Hocquard, we have an interesting account of Miss Cooke's efforts on behalf of sailors. He says:

'I joined Miss Cooke, in 1882, in starting the work of the Sailors' Rest. At this time many sailors were filling the streets of Singapore, having no place to which they could go. Miss Cooke came one evening and asked me to help her to start a Sailors' Rest. She spared no pains, labour, or trouble in the work; she wanted them to hear of Christ's sacrifice for sin. Bible-classes were held every Wednesday evening, and very happy seasons were spent in the upper room of the Rest. Soldiers also joined, for Miss Cooke had a wide heart, which welcomed every child of God. The Rest prospered; God blessed it. Many now leading good Christian lives can testify to the good received there.'

Mr. Lee mentions that he was present, he thought, at every Wednesday evening for seven years when in Singapore, and he testifies that there many genuine conversions took place.

'One evening,' he says, 'a poor fellow just out of hospital, where he had been owing to an accident, came

in to our meeting. Miss Cooke was in her very happy element whilst speaking about Jesus, her theme at all our meetings. That young man was converted in that meeting, and a dozen letters testify to the keeping power of God in his case.'

Another giddy young officer was saved at one of those meetings, and in a letter received by Miss Cooke, just before her death, his mother says: 'I wish to return special thanks to Miss Cooke for being instrumental in leading my son to the Saviour.' She used to say: 'I want the Sailors' Rest to be a nursery for heaven.'

It was such. Many after conversion there lived conspicuous lives in Singapore. She would not be gainsaid. No other person had such influence with the police, from the highest to the lowest official; no other person had the influence over the men which she had. One said to me after the funeral:

'We have lost a friend; I feel her loss next to that of my own mother. My brother, a soldier, was converted just before he came to Singapore, and found a friend in Miss Cooke. I attended one of her meetings after I came here. The first man I met told me Miss Cooke had been used for his conversion. This soldier could not read, but at once on his conversion bought a Bible, and commenced to study it. He is still living a good Christian life.'

Instances of her usefulness sometimes came curiously to light.

'One day,' says Mr. Lee, 'a postman at Brighton was delivering a parcel to a lady. He surprised her by asking, "Excuse me, is not that Miss Cooke's handwriting?"—which it was. He continued, "I was brought to know the Lord by Miss Cooke when a soldier at Singapore."''

A lady visiting Wales noticed a woman offering dolls for sale in the Old Welsh costume. She stopped to order some to be done for her, adding :

'They must be very nicely done, as they are to be sent a long way off—to Singapore.'

'To Singapore!' exclaimed the woman. 'Then they shall have the best work I can put into them, for Miss Cooke was the means of conversion to my son.'

But many as were the known cases in which she was the means of spiritual blessing, no doubt there were very many more which will not be known till 'the day shall declare it.' She herself deprecated counting up results in the following wise words :

'Many friends have asked me how many Christians can be numbered in connection with our school, and for their gratification I have often tried to number them ; but now I must say, in the words of a devoted Christian who has been the means of leading many to the Saviour : " I will not make any statement as to the number of believers, for when one begins to number Satan is at hand."

'The day will reveal it. It is better and happier to work on, leaving all in the Lord's hand, than to sit down and count. When He gives us the crown, there will be the right number of stars in it, and it will be time enough to see what the Lord hath done by us.'

From Mr. Philips, formerly resident in Singapore, we find that she did not limit her ministrations to the sailors to spiritual things. He describes some Thursday evening classes she had for merchant seamen, and says that 'after Bible reading there was tea and cake, and other luxuries not often coming in the way of these guests. Everything was done to make them feel that they were men who had friends to care for them abroad, by Miss Cooke and her kind assistant, Miss Ryan.'

Many destitute sailors were fed and clothed by her, and invalids were attended to.

One more extract we must give from the letter of a friend who was very dear to Miss Cooke, and who was frequently at her house. She writes :

‘ Hers was a beautiful example to these Chinese girls of what Christian life should be. Though her engagements and various calls on her time were so numerous, everything was done systematically and in order, everything in house, schoolroom, and grounds neat and clean, a place for everything, and everything in its place. The intelligence and developed intellect of her grown-up Chinese boarders, who had perhaps been with her from childhood, seemed quite remarkable. They read English books of history with me, and spoke with knowledge of European countries and peoples. They could with no preparation take up their slates and write a well-worded letter, the spelling faultless, and the composition much above the average. They were naturally clever at needlework, and took pleasure in making tasty articles for their friends, and in decorating the yearly Christmas-tree their kind benefactor provided for them. She liked to make their lives bright, and planned many an outing and treat, sparing no pains or toil to give them pleasure as well as instruction. These girls were trained to prepare bouquets of flowers with texts attached for those in hospital, and toys, work, and tempting food for the poor sufferers in the Leper Hospital.

‘ It was surprising how much she managed to do, considering her advanced age and the enervating effect of the Straits climate ; no one could but look with wonder on her dauntless energy and untiring perseverance in her work for souls in all ranks of life.

‘ She would take tempting food to the very sick in the

Raise me higher

Raise me higher, Raise me higher,
Out of sin's dark gloomy sea.
To the Saviour bring me higher
Who was crucified for me.
Come ye angels spread your bright wings,
Bear me to Golgotha's height
When redemption there was finished
Let me see the wondrous sight.

Raise me higher, Raise me higher,
From the fumes of pain and woe,
Ever higher, ever higher,
Sorrow's flames around me glow.
Come ye angels spread your bright wings,
Bear me up to Sion's height
Let me see the Saviour's glory
Grief shall vanish at the sight.

SPECIMEN OF A CHINESE GIRL'S HANDWRITING

To face p. 86.

European Hospital, and after visiting each bed with a kind word and look, and a share of the good things, perhaps at the hottest time of a tropical day, she would give no heed to fatigue, but take her seat at a table in one of the hospital's enclosed verandas, where the convalescents gathered round her, and read with a bright face helpful Gospel hymns, and speak to her listeners of the precious offers of salvation from God's Word. Even still more trying must have been the encountering of the evening heat in the close air of the streets in the Chinese part of the town, where she held her Bible readings, where the stairs were so difficult for her rather infirm body that she had to be assisted up by her stalwart constables, who were many of them deeply attached to her.

'While I was residing at Singapore, she commenced a branch of the Young Women's Christian Association, and held bright monthly meetings at her home, trying to draw in European and Eurasian young ladies to join in work for the Saviour. During this time she despatched many boxes of clothes, collected and made through the influence of these meetings, to the poor refugees at Jerusalem. I never knew her anything but cheerful, ready to enter into others' plans and pleasures, enjoying little innocent amusements, ready to laugh and rejoice. She and her girls took pleasure in sending bouquets and other offerings to young brides, or to any of the English community departing by outgoing steamers, accompanied by a little book or word that might remind them of better things.

'I cannot close without referring to dear Miss Ryan, who always seemed engaged in carefully training the girls, and must have endeared herself to them.'

This description shows vividly how, while giving the first place to great religious duties, Sophia Cooke did not

leave other nameless little duties and amenities undone, thus attaining, through the grace of God, that completeness of character and life which is extremely beautiful in an aged Christian.

From her whole career three lessons in particular seem to stand out for us. We see how our faithful God kept her throughout a life prolonged beyond its usual length. He guided her in youth, controlled her in life's prime, sustained and gladdened her in its decline. Every such instance is a lovely object-lesson for us who remain, teaching us to trust in God for the future :

'Be the day weary, or, be the day long,
Till at last it ringeth to evensong.'

But while we admire the grace which kept her from inconsistencies, and checked any failings in her natural character, we must also observe the means of grace she persistently used. She was not a *careless* Christian, imagining that all she had to do was, as it were, to sit down by faith in an easy-chair, and be carried thus into heaven ; she was watchful and prayerful. She was a constant student of Scripture, and 'she grew thereby.' 'Sanctify them by Thy truth ; Thy word is truth,' was our Saviour's prayer.

Secondly, the special characteristic of her missionary work, which no one can fail to notice all along in her life, was the importance she attached to setting all Christians to work for the good of others. This was, perhaps, an almost original experiment of hers—at least, to the extent to which she carried it. It seemed an idea struck out by her own religious instinct.

In later days, the same idea has been acted on in the Salvation and Church Armies, and has been pursued with striking success in Uganda.

But thirdly, and above all, was the fact that the deep-down foundation of her religion was Christ Himself. Christ was Alpha and Omega, All in All to her, for her own needs and those of others. The simple truths of the Gospel were her support, and to these she clung with increasing tenacity, as lengthening experience more and more convinced her of their value. The words of a dying young Christian expressed Miss Cooke's abiding feeling in life and in death: 'Jesus only! Jesus only! Jesus enough!' May her experience be our own!

POSTSCRIPT.

THE friend who, in kind compliance with the request of the Committee, has written the foregoing interesting sketch of Sophia Cooke and her Forty-Two Years' Work in Singapore, has expressed a wish that I should add some words of personal reminiscence, as it was my privilege to be intimately associated with her in friendship and correspondence during the whole of her long term of service abroad. She always shrank from speaking about her work, and her Committee, therefore, know more of it from eye-witnesses than from herself. Sir Harry and Lady Ord in particular, who, while the former was Governor of the Straits Settlements, knew her intimately, furnished many interesting details which would otherwise never have been known.

But her works do follow her. The following testimony from Miss Gage-Brown, who is now occupying her post, will speak for itself: 'The more I see of the work here, the more I see how solid it is.' A warm welcome had awaited Miss Cooke's successor. A number of former pupils, now married and living in the neighbourhood, lined the steps to share in the welcome; and the girls

were gathered in the schoolroom, where she was greeted with praise and prayer. Subsequent letters from Miss Gage-Brown show that her first impressions of the value of Miss Cooke's work are deepened and strengthened as time goes on.

ROSAMOND ANNE WEBB.

THE END.