

REV. CALVIN W. MATEER, D.D.
One of the makers of New China.

The Missionary Review of the World

Published by Funk and Wagnalls Company (Isaac K. Funk, Pres., A. W. Wagnalls, Vice-Pres., Robert J. Cuddihy, Treas., Robert Scott, Sec'y),
44-60 E. 23d St., New York

VOL. XXXIV. No. 11
Old Series

NOVEMBER, 1911

VOL. XXIV. No. 11
New Series

SIGNS OF THE TIMES*

WAR AND MISSIONS IN TRIPOLI

The war-cloud that has so perpetually hovered over various parts of Europe has finally passed over to North Africa, and has broken in a shower of shot and shell in the Turkish province of Tripoli. Italy alleged that the rights of her subjects have not been respected, and grew impatient at the usual prolonged parleying of the Turkish Government. As a result war was declared, and the Italian ships have captured many Turkish vessels and have bombarded and captured the ports of Tripoli. Many see in this a prospect of the breaking up of the Turkish Empire. Italy was, no doubt, precipitate in her action and covetous in her desire for possession of Tripoli; but any who have traveled or lived in Turkish dominions have experienced the exasperating conditions and barbarism that prevail. Turkish diplomacy is wily and has generally succeeded in avoiding war even when provocation was extreme. It is not to be wondered at that Italy declined to wait indefinitely for a reply to her demands.

As a Christian missionary field Tripoli is almost unoccupied, the only Protestant station being at Tripoli, where the North Africa Mission has two married missionaries and two single lady missionaries. The country is as large as Texas and New Eng-

land plus New York State. It is mountainous, dry and hot. The population numbers about 600,000, or 1,000,000, including Benghazi or Barka to the east of Tripoli proper. Most of the population are Berber, but the Jews are numerous. The European population numbers about 6,000, most of whom are Italians. There are few Turks; but while Arabic is usually spoken, Turkish is the official language. The capital, Tripoli, has a population of about 35,000. Islam is, of course, the prevailing religion.

MISSIONS IN TURKEY

The war with Italy has attracted more attention to Turkey. It has even been suggested that, should Italy be successful, the Turks may claim compensation elsewhere—as in Greece—and that there might even be a general uprising against Christians in the empire. There is no doubt that great bitterness prevails among the Moslems, and the present war may bring about greater complications in European politics or may even hasten the dismemberment of Turkey. We do not, however, anticipate any of these more serious consequences at present.

Turkey has a large empire, including a population of nearly twenty-five millions. The religious following is still greater, as the 200,000,000 Moslems of the world are all interested in the fate of the empire.

* The editors seek to preserve accuracy and to manifest the spirit of Christ in the pages of this REVIEW, but do not acknowledge responsibility for opinions expressed, or positions taken by contributors to signed articles in these pages.—EDITORS.



DR. MATEER AND THE MANDARIN REVISION COMMITTEE

CALVIN W. MATEER, A MAKER OF THE NEW CHINA

BY JOHN T. FARIS, PHILADELPHIA

The class of 1857 at Washington and Jefferson College had among its members two men who were destined to become educators in fields thousands of miles apart. These were Daniel W. Fisher, for many years president of Hanover College, Indiana, and Calvin W. Mateer, whose work for education in China made him "one of the makers of the new China." When God told Doctor Mateer—then nearly seventy-three years old—that his work for China was done, it was Doctor Fisher who was chosen to prepare the graphic story of his life that has just been published.*

Calvin Wilson Mateer was born on a farm near Harrisburg, Pa., on January 9, 1836. His parents were of that sturdy Scotch-Irish stock that has done so much for America and the world. Both were earnest Christians, vitally interested in foreign missionary work. Mr. Mateer's quiet, earnest life made a deep impression on his

children, but the son Calvin always insisted that the influence of his mother had been most potent in his life. She had always longed for a college education—indeed, the story is told that once she dreamed that she had entered as a student at Mount Holyoke, but awoke in tears to find that she was white-haired. Children trained by such a mother could not fail to desire the education made possible by careful planning and economy of both father and mother.

The home training bore rich fruit. Seldom has there been as remarkable a record as that made by the Mateer family. Calvin was the oldest of seven children—five brothers and two sisters. Calvin and Robert became missionaries in Shantung, China; John for five years had charge of the Presbyterian Mission Press at Shanghai, and later of the Congregational Press at Peking, where he died; Lillian taught in the Girls' School at Tengchow, and married a Baptist missionary in Shanghai; William desired to become a missionary, but reluctantly turned to a business career, yielding

* Calvin W. Mateer. By Daniel W. Fisher. 12mo, pages 338. With index. \$1.50. The Westminster Press. 1911.

to the advice of those who felt that his duty was at home; Jennie married a Presbyterian minister, and both were under appointment to go to China, when ill-health compelled them to remain at home; Horace is a professor in the University of Wooster, Ohio.

After leaving college, and before entering the Western Theological Seminary at Allegheny, Pa., Mateer taught in the academy at Beaver, Pa. There one of his pupils was J. R. Miller, who has been for years perhaps the most widely read devotional writer in the world. Doctor Miller says of his young teacher: "I suppose that when the records are all known, it will be seen that no other man did as much for the shaping of my life as he did."

Altho from boyhood Calvin Mateer's thoughts had been turned to the foreign field as the possible scene of his life work, it was not until near the close of his seminary course that he definitely offered himself to the Board of Foreign Missions. He was accepted, but it was impossible to send him at once, on account of the disturbed condition incident to the Civil War. For a season he was stated supply of the Presbyterian Church at Delaware, Ohio, where he was married to Miss Julia A. Brown. In 1863 they were told to prepare to go to Tengchow, China, and on July 3 of that year they sailed, with Mr. and Mrs. Hunter Corbett as fellow passengers.

The voyage on a sailing vessel proved to be one of the most trying that missionaries have ever been called upon to endure. Looking back on it thirty-four years later, Doctor Mateer said: "If there had been no other way to get back to America than through such another experience, it is doubtful whether I should ever have

seen my native land again." The trip required one hundred and sixty-five days. The captain was a tyrant to the crew, and all but brutal to the passengers, especially the missionaries, whom he hated for their work's sake. The food was scanty and poorly prepared, but fortunately the missionaries escaped the scurvy that attacked the sailors. Doctor Mateer said, many years later, that he thought the health of both Doctor Corbett and Mrs. Mateer was permanently affected by ill-treatment at this time.

From Shanghai a coasting steamer took them to Chefu, but within a short distance of the destination the vessel was wrecked. The passengers were landed, and passed hours of misery trying to find their way to Chefu amid snow and ice. At length they returned to the scene of the wreck, where they found an English gunboat, which carried them to Chefu. A few days later they arrived at Tengchow.

In 1864 there were not many more than one hundred ordained Protestant missionaries in all China. In Shantung only Chefu and Tengchow were occupied. At Tengchow the Baptists had begun work in 1860, while the Presbyterians followed soon after. Two of the Baptist missionaries were killed by robbers, while the Presbyterian forces were depleted by sickness. The Mateers and the Corbetts came just when they were most needed.

Almost at once Mr. Mateer was called upon to exercise the mechanical and inventive gifts for which he soon became noted. No house being available for his use, he cleared a room in the rough house of another missionary, built a chimney, and made a stove, since none could be bought in the city.

His story of how he worked is worth reading:

"Mr. Mills and I went to work to make a stove out of tin. We had the top and bottom of an old sheet-iron stove for a foundation, from which we finally succeeded in making what proves to be a very good stove. We put over one hundred and sixty rivets in it in the process of making it. I next had my ingenuity taxed to make a machine to press the fine coal they burn here into balls or blocks, so that we could use it. They have been simply setting it with a sort of gum water and molding it into balls with their hands. Thus prepared it was too soft and porous to burn well. So, as it was the time of the new year, and we could not obtain a teacher, I went to work, and with considerable trouble, and working at a vast disadvantage from want of proper tools, I succeeded in making a machine to press the coal into solid square blocks. At first it seemed as if it would be a failure, for altho it prest the coal admirably, it seemed impossible to get the block out of the machine successfully. This was obviated, however, and it worked very well, and seems to be quite an institution."

This machine subsequently he improved, so that a boy could turn out the fuel with great rapidity.

Later, under his own supervision, the house was built which was his home from 1867 to 1894. There he did most of his lifework, and there the Mandarin Revision Committee held its first meeting.

Mateer's ability to use tools always stood him in good stead. His life was filled with so many other activities that his friends were apt to pay little attention to his mechanical contri-

vances. But his achievements "With Apparatus and Machinery" (this is the title of an intensely interesting chapter of the biography) were so noteworthy that they would have been thought sufficient for the entire work of an ordinary lifetime. He had had no training except that received on the home farm, where much of the machinery used was made on the place, yet he could turn his hand to anything. He made a casket for a missionary's child when none was available; he made an electric fan, using as a model a small one he had bought. He taught electrotyping to a class of native artizans, after he had picked up the art for himself. When a large dynamo failed to produce a current he unwound the machine, located the fault, reinsulated the wire and rewound the coil. At his own expense he fitted up a workshop where he kept a workman, whose wages he paid himself. He was able to do anything "from setting up a windmill or water system, or installing an engine and dynamo, to brazing broken spectacle frames or repairing a bicycle." During one of his earlier furloughs he spent some time in the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Philadelphia, in order that—on his return to China—he might construct the model of a locomotive for the instruction of Chinese boys. It is said he found difficulty in convincing some of the skilled mechanics that he had not been trained to the business. When on his way to America on his last furlough a train was delayed by difficulty with the locomotive. No one seemed able to remedy the difficulty till Mateer pointed it out and instructed the workmen how to proceed.

This mechanical ability was turned

to good account in attracting the Chinese. In later years, at his own expense, a museum was equipped, in which numerous marvels were shown, many of these being of his own construction. Through this museum 12,000 people were brought into touch with the Gospel in a single year (1909).

Doctor Mateer also turned this peculiar gift to good account by starting industries for native Christians and by promoting self-help among the needy. Now it was a loom for weaving coarse Chinese linsey or bagging, or a spinning or a knitting machine that he ordered; again, he inquired for a roller press to be used for drying and pressing cotton cloth after dyeing; and more than once he sent for a lathe for a Chinese blacksmith. In 1896 he interested himself in procuring an outfit for a flouring mill. He said: "The enterprise of starting the mill was conceived by Chinese Christians, and they are going to form a company to raise the money. I do not think that there is a roller mill in China—certainly not in North China. . . . We personally will not make a cent out of it; but we are interested to get the Chinese Christians started in an enterprise by which they can make a living, and introduce improvements into their country."

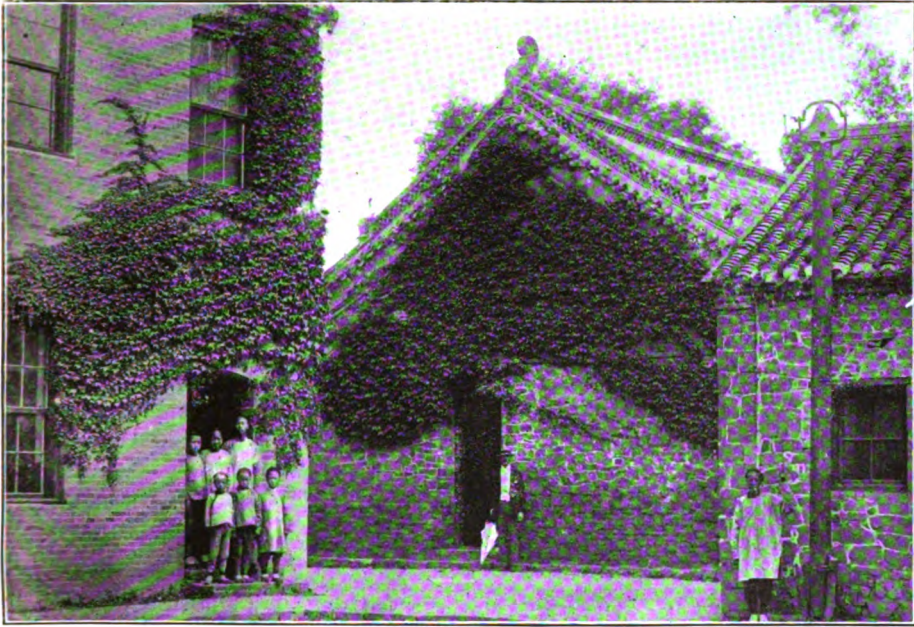
His apprentices went out in many instances master blacksmiths, machinists, and electricians, and had no difficulty in finding places. A Chinese general, temporarily at Tengchow, employed one of these men as a blacksmith, and it was so evident that his order was evidently according to Western methods that he paid a visit to the wonderful shop of this wonderful master. The very last man for

whom he obtained a place was his most skilled electrician and his latest foreman.

But the mechanical work whose influence was so far-reaching was only an incident in the life of Doctor Mateer. His name will be remembered chiefly for his labors to make the study of the difficult Chinese tongue more simple for his successors. When he began language study, printed helps were few and not very good. Teachers were scarce. His progress was slow. Yet, in the words of one of his associates, he "became not only the prince of Mandarin speakers among foreigners in China, but also so grasped the principles of the language as to enable him in future years to issue the most thoroughgoing and complete work on the language, the most generally used text-book for all students of the spoken tongue."

The genesis of the Mandarin Lessons is interesting. In 1867, desiring to help his wife's sister in language study, he prepared lessons for her, based on the idioms. These were so successful that other missionaries urged him to carry on the work for them. So, gradually, the purpose was born to prepare lessons for print. This work he did most thoroughly—he did everything thoroughly—as he could take time from other occupations. While the task was still far from complete, he wrote of it:

"Each lesson illustrates an idiom, the word idiom being taken with some latitude. The sentences, as you will see, are gathered from all quarters, and introduce every variety of subject. I have also introduced every variety of style that can be called Mandarin, the higher style being found chiefly in the second hundred lessons.



A CHAPEL IN TENG CHOW, FORMERLY THE KUAN YIN TEMPLE
On the left is the college building, and on the right the old school-room.

The prevailing object, however, is to help people to learn Mandarin as it is spoken. I have tried to avoid distinct localisms, but not colloquialisms. A large acquaintance with these is important, not to say essential, to every really good speaker of Mandarin. It is, of course, possible to avoid the most of them, and to learn to use a narrow range of general Mandarin which never leaves the dead level of commonplace expressions, except to introduce some stilted book phrase. This, however, is not what the Chinese themselves do, nor is it what foreigners should seek to acquire. Many colloquialisms are very widely used, and they serve to give force and variety to the language, expressing in many instances what can not be expressed in any other way. I have tried to represent all quarters, and in order to do so I have in many cases given two or more forms."

The lessons were not published until 1892—twenty-five years after they were begun. They immediately became popular; now they are more largely used than any similar help. A large portion of the profits was generously devoted to the extension of work in the mission schools and other institutions.

At the urgent request of the Synod of China, the lessons were printed at the Mission Press in Shanghai, of which Doctor Mateer was superintendent from 1870 to 1872. During his incumbency, as well as in later years, the Press published a number of other books written by him. Among those were an algebra and geometry.

Next to the Mandarin Lessons, perhaps his most important literary work was the Mandarin version of the Bible, of which he was one of the translators. At the first general missionary conference in Shanghai in May, 1877,

it was decided that it was necessary to have new versions of the entire Bible that would displace the many partial versions in use. One version in simple Wen-li (or Classic), and one in Mandarin (or popular language) were determined on. Doctor Mateer was appointed on the committee of five which had the latter version in charge. Of this committee Doctor Mateer and Doctor Chauncey Goodrich alone continued at work until the New Testament was completed in 1907. The translation of the Old Testament was begun by the committee which completed the New Testament.

Doctor Mateer was not only an educator through his books; he was an active teacher during most of the period of his services in China. In September, 1863, a school for Chinese boys was opened in his own home. Mrs. Mateer joined her husband in teaching. The work was slow, but the missionaries never wearied. Thirteen years later the first class was graduated. For five years more it continued, doing the work of high-school and collegiate grade without making any pretensions to the name college. Then it was finally called a college. During the eighteen years it had educated more or less completely two hundred pupils, and all of those who remained long enough and were mature enough became Christians.

Doctor Mateer continued at the head of the Tengchow College until 1895. In 1904 it was removed to Wei-hsien, a far better location. Doctor Mateer also removed to Wei-hsien, not because he was teaching in the college, but because he could not live away from it. Yet even if he was not officially connected with the institution,

he was always working for it. In 1907 he consented to become president, in an emergency, and he carried on the work for a short time.

One of the striking incidents of his funeral service at Tsingtao was the reading of the statistics of the graduates of the Tengchow College, including the students who came with the college to Wei-hsien. These have since been carefully revised, and are as follows: Total receiving diplomas, 205; teachers in government schools, 38; teachers in church schools, 68; pastors, 17; evangelists, 16; literary work, 10; in business, 9; physicians, 7; post-office service, 4; railroad service, 2; Y. M. C. A. service, 2; customs service, 1; business clerks, 2; 1 secretary; at their homes, 6; deceased, 22. These graduates are scattered among thirteen denominations and one hundred schools, and in sixteen provinces of China. About two hundred more who were students at Tengchow did not complete the course of studies.

Doctor Mateer was always an evangelist as well as a teacher. With joy he preached his first sermon in Chinese; and the joy of telling the people of Him who died to save them increased as the years passed. In Tengchow, and far away in the interior, he found his way to the hearts of the people as he delivered his message. Thirty-three years after reaching China he wrote:

"I have traveled in mule litters, on donkeys, and on foot over a large part of the province of Shantung, preaching from village to village, on the streets and by the wayside. Over the nearer portions I have gone again and again. My preaching tours would aggregate from twelve thousand to fif-

teen thousand miles, including from eight thousand to twelve thousand addresses to the heathen."

Very soon he came to realize that the future of the new China depends not so much on the missionaries as on the native evangelists, and he wrote: "The need of the hour in China is not more new stations with expensive buildings and wide itinerating. It is rather teaching and training what we have, and giving it a proper development. Most of all we should raise up and prepare pastors and preachers and teachers, who are well grounded in the truth, so that the Chinese Church may have wise and safe leaders. . . . There are already enough mission stations, or centers, in the province, if they are properly worked. The need of the hour is to consolidate and develop what we have, and by all means in our power develop native agency, and teach and locate native pastors—men who are well grounded in the faith."

From the early days of the Tengchow school he had native Christians in training, and to the close of his life he urged the necessity of equipping Chinese for work among their countrymen. As pastor at Tengchow he gave many object-lessons in what he meant, and the success of the work there is an eloquent testimony to the wisdom of his plans and the faithfulness of his work.

Thus passed forty-four years of a life of prayer, a life of toil, a life of joyful endurance of hardships for the sake of his Master. Before he left America, he said in public:

"I have given my life to China. I expect to live there, to die there, and to be buried there. . . ." Again he said: "I expect to die in heathen China, but I expect to rise in Christian China."

He did die in heathen China—but it was a China less heathen because of God's blessing on his efforts. His



CHINESE CHRISTIANS AT THE GRAVE OF DR. C. W. MATEER

death followed months of suffering, during which he was engaged on the translation of the Psalms into Mandarin. When he was rapidly sinking he prayed that he might live to finish the book. But God saw fit to take him before the work was done.

His last words were, "Holy! Holy!

True and Mighty!" Soon after gasping this expression of his wondering faith—on September 28, 1908—he "fell asleep."

In the vault prepared at Chefu his body waits for the resurrection. Then he shall see—according to his prayer—a Christian China.

ADDRESS TO A YOUNG MISSIONARY *

BY REV. JOHN ROSS, D.D., OF MUKDEN, MANCHURIA

This day is for you one of the most important of your life. All your past converges on it, all your future will be developed from it. Your mental faculties and physical powers have been molded and fashioned by the blows of circumstances and the polishing of scholarship, which have shaped you into a vessel fit for your Master's use. And this prepared vessel you this day dedicate to your Master's service in a sphere where it can be put to the greatest possible use. On the splendid field where your every talent and every faculty, natural and acquired, will find abundant exercise, it is impossible to dwell. My remarks must be confined to the elucidation of one principle by giving a few hints which, as the results of experience, may be of some little practical use.

You go to a people who, through scores of centuries, have acted on the theory that the value of instruction does not consist in the amount or variety of knowledge accumulated, but in the formation of character. And of all forms of instruction known to this world no one is so potent toward the formation of character—in its twofold aspect of strength and purity—as is the Christian religion, which you go to teach.

Now, as it is true that the people "can not hear without a preacher," it is equally true that the preacher is of no practical service without an attentive hearer. Before you can impart instruction you must first secure a willing ear. My remarks shall be confined to point out briefly the manner in which this end may be attained.

The first requisite is accurate knowledge of the spoken language of the people. The belief is general that the Chinese language is one difficult to acquire. This belief is mistaken, as far as the spoken language is concerned. One acquainted with German or French will find no difficulty in pronouncing any Chinese sound. The strong guttural of Scotch or German occurs continually. Even more important, however, than the pronunciation is grammatical construction. Speakers who translate word for word from English never make themselves perfectly understood. But idiomatic phraseology always gains the ear of the Chinese.

The second requisite is a knowledge of Chinese etiquette. They are a very polite people, and they call Europeans barbarians simply because of ignorance of manners according to Chinese custom. I am not aware of a

* An address given to a young missionary at his ordination, when he was about to set out for China.