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POISONOUS FISH AND FISH-POISONING IN CHINA.*

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THE porpoise occupies greater space by far in Chinese ichthyology than any fish. Ch'ên's Cyclopaedia quotes thirty authors who refer to it. Few fishes are so prized for their flavour, and none so much condemned for poisonous qualities. Like English, German, French and other maritime people, the Chinese name the animal from its resemblance to a pig,—it is the ho-t'un, "river pig," of which there are two varieties, a white and a black. It enters the rivers from the sea early in spring, is very abundant in the Yangtze, which it ascends over a thousand miles—as far as the rapids allow. On its first appearance it is fat, and less hurtful as food than at a later period. A portion of fat found in the abdomen is so esteemed that it is styled "Ti Tsze's milk," that lady being pre-eminent among all comely women for her beauty. One writer attributes the fatness to willow leaf-buds, on which the porpoise feeds; but another combats that idea, inasmuch as the fatness is found to exist before the pendent willow branches reach the water's surface and begin to sprout. The former observer, it may be remarked, lived higher up the Yangtze, where the willow-buds and porpoise appear synchronously. Another writer says willow-buds are hurtful to fish. Porpoises, it is added, are a terror to fish, none daring to attack them; their appearance in large numbers indicates a blow. A centenarian author who wrote at the close of the twelfth century is cited to show the risk of indulging in porpoise flesh. It is quoted by the renowned poet See T'ungpo, who remarks, that "the price of porpoise-eating is death," and then narrates

* Written for Prof. S. F. Baird, Commissioner of United States Fish and Fishery Bureau.

my asking his opinion, affirmed that both were *wauli*, and that no fault was to be found with either for misplaced particles, though he did complain of these complicated phrases in vs.2, and 11, of the Hankow, as 拖沓. He added that the Delegates' work was like old wine, stronger and of higher flavour, the Hankow version much easier but flatter to the taste.

All I see of Mr. John's version leads me to hope that it may after all become our—if not Authorized yet however—Common Version of the New Testament; always allowing our excellent Brother *three or four years at least* to perfect its rendering in communication with his brethren.

METHODS OF MISSION WORK.

LETTER IV.

BY REV. J. L. NEVIUS, D.D.

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF STATIONS IN CENTRAL SHANTUNG.

PREACHING tours formed a prominent part of mission work from the first occupation of Shantung by Protestant missionaries in the year 1860. During the years that immediately followed, the whole of eastern Shantung was traversed by members of the American Baptist and Presbyterian Missions. In 1866, Rev. C. W. Mateer and Rev. H. Corbett made a tour in central Shantung for the purpose chiefly of distributing and selling books. This was the first visit paid to Ch'ing-ch'ow fu and vicinity by Protestant missionaries. It was afterwards visited repeatedly by Dr. Williamson and other members of the U. P. Mission of Scotland, and Rev. J. MacIntyre, a member of that mission, resided two years in Wei Hien, the chief city of the adjacent district on the east. It was also visited from time to time by different members of the American Presbyterian mission, and in 1874, and 1875, was included in my regular itinerating tours, made twice a year.

Rev. Timothy Richard commenced regular work in Ch'ing-chow fu as a resident missionary in 1875. There were then in that region only two converts, and these were connected with Mr. Corbett.

Previous to the work of Famine Distribution in the spring of 1877, Mr. Richard had gathered about him a little company of enquirers, and I had also a few enquirers in the district of En-ch'ue about forty five miles S. E. of Ch'ing-chow fu.

In the spring of 1877, Mr. Richard and Rev. Alfred G. Jones gave all their time and energies to the work of Famine Relief. I took part in the same work in Kao-yai a market town in the western extremity of En-ch'ue, and near the borders of the two other *hien* Ling-ch'ü and Ch'ang-loh, and continued it about three months until the close of the famine, distributing aid to about 30,000 people, from more than 300 villages.

The famine relief presented us in a new and favorable light, and gave a fresh impulse to our work of evangelization. The establishment of stations may be said to have fairly begun after the famine, though a spirit of enquiry had been awakened before. In the spring of 1879, Mr. Corbett again visited this region, and from this time took part in mission work there.

There are now in the department of Ching-chow fu connected with the English Baptist mission, and with Mr. Corbett and myself about one hundred and fifty stations, and near 2,500 converts, about 1,000 of them belonging to the Baptist Mission. On the main points of mission policy we are happily nearly of one mind. All these stations provide their own houses of worship; none of them are cared for by a resident paid preacher; but in each of them is one or more of its own members who voluntarily conducts services on Sunday and attends to the general spiritual interests of the little company of believers with whom he is connected, under the superintendence of the foreign missionary in charge. In all these stations great prominence is given to catechetical teaching, and also to affording special instruction to the leaders, with the view of their teaching others. These form the distinguishing features of our work; and are our main points of agreement.

The Baptist stations have multiplied chiefly through the voluntary labours of unpaid Christians; and radiate from the centre at Ch'ing-chow fu. Their staff of Chinese labourers now consists of a Native Pastor who is a Nanking man and was baptized more than twenty years ago, and four evangelists paid by the mission; and two elders paid by the native Christians.

My work spread from the centre at Kao-yai, almost entirely so far as natives are concerned, through the voluntary labours of the Chinese Christians. My staff of paid labourers at present consists of two native helpers, supported hitherto partly by the natives and partly by myself. I have from the first used a few others occasionally.

Mr. Corbett commenced his work with the assistance of church members from older stations. He has used a much larger number of helpers, and his stations are more disconnected, being found in different districts to which his preachers and evangelists have been

sent. His staff of native labourers consists of about twenty-two paid helpers, and twenty teachers. The latter receive from him on an average about fifteen dollars a year, with what they can get in addition from the natives.

With these general statements respecting the whole field, I propose to give a more detailed account of my own stations and work, with which I am naturally more intimately acquainted. I presume however that in detailing my own experience I shall be giving in the main that also of my brethren. When important points of difference occur they will be spoken of *in loco*.

MUTUAL RELATIONS OF THE MISSIONARY, HELPERS, AND LEADERS.

The characteristic feature of our stations is that the principal care of them is intrusted, not to paid preachers set over them and resident among them, but to leaders belonging to the stations. These leaders are simply Church members among Church members, pursuing their daily calling as before conversion. They form a very important link in the chain of influences starting from the foreign missionary. Next to the missionary is the native helper, who is generally a well instructed Christian of some years experience. He is under the control and direction of the missionary, and acts for him in supplementing his labors and carrying out his instructions. Next to the helper is the leader, through whom principally the helper brings his influence to bear on the Christians and enquirers generally. The stations are organized on the principle that all its members are to be workers. It is our aim that each man women and child shall be both a learner from some one more advanced, and a teacher of some one less advanced. Theoretically the missionary does nothing which the helper can do for him; the helper does nothing which the leader can do; and the leader does nothing which he can devolve upon those under him. In this way much time is saved; the gifts of all are utilized and developed; and the station as an organized whole grows in knowledge, strength and efficiency. The leader constantly superintends, directs and examines those under him; the helper directs and examines the leaders and their stations; and the missionary in charge has a general supervision and control of the whole.

It has been my habit to visit the stations regularly twice a year; to examine carefully into the circumstances of each one of them; and the progress in knowledge and performance of Christian duties of each Christian inquirer.

One of my helpers has the charge of nearly forty stations located in four different districts or *Hien*, which he visits regularly once every two months. The other helper has the charge of about

ten stations and devotes $\frac{1}{2}$ part of his time to evangelistic work outside of them. A few are without the care of a native helper and are only visited by the foreign missionary.

The forty stations under one helper are divided into seven geographical groups of from four to seven stations each. The helper visits these groups in regular rotation, once every two months by appointment, spending about a week in each. On Sunday he holds a general or union service; leaders and other prominent Church members being present. The object aimed at is to make this union service, conducted by the helper, the model for the leaders to pattern after in their several stations during the seven or eight weeks, when they are by themselves. Once in two months when the helper is absent, each of these groups has a similar union service conducted by the leaders, exercises and persons in charge having been appointed by the helper in advance.

The form of exercises for Sundays both morning and afternoon, consists of four parts. *First*, a kind of informal *Sunday School* in which every person present is expected, with the superintendence of the leader and those under him, to prosecute his individual studies; whether learning the Chinese character; committing to memory passages of Scripture; telling Scripture stories; the study of the catechism or Scripture question books. *Second*, we have the more formal *Service* of worship, consisting of singing, reading of the Scripture with a few explanations or exhortations, and prayer; the whole occupying not more than three quarters of an hour. *Third*, we have the *Scripture Story Exercise*. Some one previously appointed tells the story; the leader of the meeting then calls on different persons one after another to reproduce it in consecutive parts; and afterwards all present take part in drawing practical lessons and duties from it. There is never time for more than one story and often that one has to be divided, and has two Sundays given to it. *Fourth*, If there is time a *Catechetical Exercise* follows in which all unite, designed to bring out more clearly the meaning of what they have already learned—as the Lord's prayer, the Ten Commandments, select passages of Scripture, some book of Scripture, or some special subject such as the duty of benevolence, &c.

This general order of exercises is modified or varied when the circumstances of a station make it advisable that it should be.

Leaders are sometimes formally selected by their stations. More generally however they find themselves in this position as the natural result of providential circumstances. In many cases the leader is the person who originated the station with which he is connected, the other members having been brought into the Church by

his instrumentality. These members look up to him as their natural head and teacher, and a strong feeling of gratitude, Christian sympathy and responsibility, grows up spontaneously. In some cases persons brought in afterwards are more gifted or literary than the original leader, and after a time take his place, or are associated with him as joint leaders. In some stations women are the first converts, and even after men have joined them, exert a marked, if not the chief, influence, and take a prominent part in teaching, exhortation and prayer.

Chapels. The Chapels, with the Chapel furniture, are provided by the natives themselves. As a rule they are not separate buildings but form a part of the ordinary Chinese dwelling house. Often the chapel belongs to the leader. Sometimes it is rented by the Christians; and in a few places it is a new building specially erected for the purpose of worship. When this is the case Christians from other villages assist with their contributions; and I have also generally contributed to the amount of about one tenth of the value of the building. The cost of these chapels ranges from thirty to one hundred dollars each. There is as yet no chapel the ownership of which is vested in the Church as a whole. Even when a new building is erected it belongs to the man on whose ground it stands. The fact that the chapels form a part of the ordinary dwelling houses of the people exempts the Christians, I think, from a good deal of the prejudice and persecution which is apt to be excited by and directed towards distinctive Church buildings.

INSTRUCTION OF ENQUIRERS AND CHURCH MEMBERS.

Perhaps the most important question which can arise in connection with our country stations is, how shall we most effectually carry out the command of our Saviour,—“Feed my sheep,” “Feed my lambs.” As has been before indicated the persons mainly depended upon for performing this work are the leaders. In our present circumstances in Shantung no other plan is possible. Where could we obtain native preachers for teaching and superintending the one hundred and fifty stations already established. There are less than a dozen candidates for the ministry in the whole field. We cannot yet know how many of these will be acceptable to the people; and the number of stations is constantly increasing. Were it desirable to supply each station with a native preacher we have not the men; and it would not be reasonable to suppose that we should have at this stage of our work. If we had the men, who would support them? The natives at present are too weak to do it, and if the foreign Boards were able to assume this burden, their doing so would establish a precedent which would add very much to the diffi-

culties of making the native Churches independent and self supporting in the future.

In my opinion we may go a step farther, and say that the introduction of paid preachers in each station, even if it were possible, would not at present be desirable. The leaders understand better than a person from a distance could, the individual peculiarities of their neighbors, and also the tones and inflections of the local dialect, and local expressions, illustrations and habits of thought. They are likely to be more interested in those about them, most of whom may be called their own converts, than any one else could be, and are more disposed to give them the care and attention necessary in instructing beginners. In teaching they set an example to others; a larger number of teachers is thus secured than could be obtained in any other way; and learning and teaching go on together; the one preparing for the other; and the teaching being an important part of the learning, perhaps quite as useful to the teacher as to the taught. Though the knowledge of the leaders may be elementary and incomplete, they are quite in advance of the other Church members and enquirers, and what they do know is past what the others need first to learn; and the leaders are especially fitted to communicate this knowledge, simply because they are not widely separated in intelligence and sympathy from those who are to be taught.

It must be admitted that here we are apt to meet in the beginning with serious difficulties. Sometimes it is almost impossible to find a leader. The station contains perhaps not a single person who can read. Even then however a modification of our plan is found to work good results in the end. If the weak station is within reach of a stronger, older one, it can obtain help by worshiping with and gaining instruction from it, or by some member of the older station coming to spend Sunday with his less advanced and less favored brethren. The helper too is expected to give special time and care to these weak stations. There are not a few cases of men, and also of women, who at first could not read, but can now read the Scriptures, teach and lead the singing; and are not only efficient leaders in their own stations but exert a happy influence outside of it.

From the first we emphasize *teaching* rather than *preaching*. I here use the word "preaching" in its specific sense of logical and more or less elaborate dissertation. We should remember that continuous discourse is something which is almost unknown in China. Even educated Chinamen follow it with difficulty. A carefully prepared sermon from a trained native preacher or a foreign missionary, such a sermon as would be admirably suited to an intelligent educated Christian congregation, is out of place in a new station.

From the fact that it is adapted to another kind of congregation it is by necessary consequence unsuitable here. An attempt at formal preaching by those who have neither the Scriptural knowledge nor the intellectual and practical training to fit them for it is still more to be deprecated. We who are accustomed from childhood to instruction by lectures and sermons, naturally and very properly introduce them in the mission centres where we are located; and our personal teachers, and pupils trained in our schools become accustomed to them and are profited by them. In the country stations a few of the more advanced Christians may be benefited by a sermon, but to the great body of hearers who most need instruction it would be like listening to utterances in an unknown tongue. This kind of preaching gives rise in the Church from its very infancy to a kind of formalism which is almost fatal to growth and progress. The congregation rises, or sits, or kneels as directed, and may maintain a reverent attitude, and listen, or have the appearance of listening, to what is said: in a word they have a service, and go home with their consciences satisfied, but their minds not enlightened. Even the Quaker method of sitting before God in silent meditation or mute reverence would be preferable to having the mind distracted by allusions to something they have not heard of, thoughts beyond their reach, and processes of reasoning which they cannot follow. I am far from saying that no good is accomplished. Those who engage in such a service, as many of them do, feeling that they are offering homage and worship to the true God their Heavenly Father, though they may only catch an occasional idea from a prayer, or an exhortation, or a sermon, will be benefited and their worship will no doubt be accepted. Most of the persons in our congregations are, as regards their mental development, in the condition of children, and have to be treated as such.

But to return to the methods of teaching which we have been led to adopt. All converts at first receive more or less oral instruction and direction from the foreign missionary, or the native helper, or the leader by whom they are brought into the Church. They are required to commit to memory and to learn the meaning of a simple Catechism containing a compendium of Christian doctrine, and also forms of prayer and passages of Scripture. During the period of probation they are expected to attend service regularly, and to perform the religious duties of professing Christians. The time of probation has varied from six months (or less in exceptional cases,) to one or two years. Our English Baptist brethren have recently increased it, fixing the minimum at eighteen months.

We have found it necessary in order to systematize and unify our work to establish rules and regulations, which are put up in

the chapels as placards. Most of them having been adopted by Mr. Corbett and myself, are now embodied in the new edition of the **入道初學** or Manual for Enquirers, which is published by the North China Tract Society. This Manual, the Catechism, and the Gospels, are the books which I place in the hands of every enquirer, and little more is needed for years in the way of text books for those who have not previously learned to read.

The Manual contains General Directions for prosecuting Scripture Studies; Forms of Prayer; the Apostles' Creed, and Select Passages of Scripture to be committed to memory. Then follows a large selection of Scripture Stories and Parables, with directions as to how they should be recited and explained. Only the subjects of these are given with references to the places in the Bible where they are to be found. Then follow Rules for the organization and direction of Stations; Duties of Leaders and Rules for their guidance; a System of Forms for keeping Station Records of attendance and studies, &c.; a Form of Church Covenant; Scripture lessons for preparing for Baptism; the same for preparing for the Lord's Supper; Order of Exercises for Church Service and directions for spending Sunday; a Short Scripture Catechism enforcing the duty of giving of our substance for benevolent purposes; and a short Essay on the Duty of every Christian to make known the Gospel to others. To the whole is appended Questions on the various parts specially prepared to facilitate the teaching and examination of learners. A selection of our most common Hymns is also sometimes bound up with the volume.

Studies prosecuted are divided into six kinds; all Church members and enquirers are supposed to be carrying on two or three of these at the same time, of which a complete record is kept. The six kinds of studies are—Learning to Read; Memorizing Scripture; Reading Scripture in course; telling Scripture Stories; Learning the meaning of Scriptures; and Reviews of former exercises. The books used are almost exclusively in Mandarin, in the Chinese Character.

We find Catechisms and Scripture question books of great use not only for enquirers but the more advanced Christians.

I give great prominence to learning and reciting Scripture Stories and Parables, and nothing has been found to produce more satisfactory results. It excites interest, develops thought, and furnishes in a simple form a compendium of Bible History and Christian Duty; while a careful training in relating Bible Stories and drawing practical lessons from them is one of the best ways of developing preaching talent whenever it is found.

Native scholars as well as the illiterate are required to learn the Manual not only for their own sakes but in order to teach others.

They soon familiarize themselves with its contents and pass on to the general study of the Scriptures with the help of commentaries.

Bible or Training Class.—The stations of Mr. Corbett and myself are, on an average, about two hundred miles distant from our home in Chefoo. In visiting them we have only time for necessary examinations, together with general instructions and directions. To secure thorough and methodical teaching, no plan has been found practicable but that of a select number of the learners coming to us in Chefoo. These have been organized into classes which have formed a kind of Normal School. At first enquirers came. Since stations have been established, enquirers in the vicinity of them prepare for baptism at home. For several years past our classes have been composed of the more advanced Church members specially selected and invited. They come with the understanding that in going back to their homes they are to communicate what they have learned to others. They are in no sense in our employ or pay, and their previous occupations and relations continue as before. As we are absent on our tours in the spring and autumn, the classes assemble in Chefoo during the summer and winter months when we are at home, and continue in session from six weeks to two months.

In many cases we have been obliged to pay the travelling expenses of members of the classes in returning home; the money they bring with them being as a rule expended before the session is over. During the last few years however not a few have provided their own travelling expenses for both coming and returning. During their stay with us they are our guests, we furnishing them with food and lodgings. We have found this course necessary, and do not think it under the circumstances unreasonable. Most of these students are poor and could not afford to pay all their expenses. Coming as they do, requires what is to them a considerable outlay in providing decent clothing, and food by the way. The loss of time in attending the class is also to some, a matter of no small importance. Many incur heavy expenses in the course of the year in discharging the duties of Christian hospitality in their homes, where they have frequent visits from natives and foreigners; so that in entertaining them while with us, we are only in part repaying in kind for what they have already expended in establishing and extending the work in their own neighborhoods.

The studies while with us are mainly Scriptural, with additional elementary instruction in Astronomy, Geography, and History and general knowledge. Here, as in the stations, lessons are carried on catechetically; and what is taught one day is the subject of examination the next. Much attention is also given to rehearsing

Scripture stories. One hour a day is assigned to instruction in vocal music, which has been taught for many years principally by Mrs. Nevius, who has devoted herself to it with singular assiduity and success. While the classes are with us we give nearly all our time and strength to them. Those who come here with an earnest purpose to learn, enjoy the exercises and are benefited by them; those who do not, cannot bear the pressure, and soon find an excuse for going home.

My classes have numbered of late about forty. So far as practicable the same individuals come year after year. They have gone over the Gospels (some of them repeatedly); the Acts of the Apostles; Romans; and several of the other Epistles; and part of the Old Testaments. Their proficiency in Scripture knowledge will compare favorably with that of intelligent adult classes in Sunday schools at home. They could sustain a very creditable examination on the Acts of the Apostles; and also on Romans, mastering the argument and being able to reproduce it. Some have written while here so full and clear an analysis of that Epistle that their manuscripts were sought for and copied by others who could not come to the class. The hymns which they sing are for the most part translations of familiar English hymns, in the same metres as the originals, and sung to the same familiar tunes. They are taught to sing by note and some of them read music very well. They have great difficulty with the half tones, their scale and ours being different.

These classes have almost fulfilled their purpose and will probably soon give place to Theological classes; those who have attended them have acquired such a familiarity with the Scripture as enables them now to carry on their studies at home, with the help of commentaries and other Christian books.

SECRET SECTS IN SHANTUNG.

BY REV. D. H. PORTER, M.D.

(Continued from page 10.)

IV.—*Admission to sect and grades of service.*

ANY one desirous of joining the sect may do so. He must give evidence of his sincerity and must have a sponsor. The ceremony of admission is simple, as are all their rites. A table is placed in the center of the room, upon which are placed three cups of tea, and an incense pot, with three sticks of incense. Besides the candidate and his sponsor, there must be the Fa Shih, or the Hao Shih. Before the vow is taken a bowl of water is used to wash the face, and rinse the mouth, a symbol of purification. They all then kneel, and