# BLAZING THE TRAIL

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This full-length Christian novel was serialized in *The Korea Magazine* from January 1917 until June 1918. It has never been published otherwise. William Arthur Noble (born September 13, 1866 in Springville, PA; died January 6, 1945 in Stockton, CA), was an American missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Pyongyang and Seoul from 1892 to 1934. In 1906 he published a novel, *Ewa: a tale of Korea* under his own name. The pseudonym Earl Ray seems to be a combination of the second names of two of his sons, Alden Earl Noble and Elmer Ray Noble.

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## Preface

There are many characteristics of the Korean life that are rapidly disappearing under the relentless impact of the new world-forces which have entered the country during recent years. This tale is the effort to preserve some of these characteristics by crystalizing them in the form of a story.

Strange as it may seem to an outsider, Korea has a world ambition, it is not political, but moral. The Korean dream to serve the world is not without warrant in the eyes of those who have wrought with them in the service of the Christian Church during the last quarter of a century. This native Church has already begun missionary work in other lands.

One purpose of this story is to show that the Koreans have a courage and devotion that justifies such an ambition, and further. we may be able to point out that they have a simple faith and deep conception of Divine truth which marks them a separate type among the peoples of the world.

## CHAPTER I MAIDEN FALLS

Situated in North Korea, in the province of Pyeng Yang, was the home of a remarkable man. Remarkable because of the ancestral history that was represented in his person as the sole survivor of his clan; remarkable for his achievements, and remarkable that he was unaware of being remarkable. His home was a straw-thatched hut nestled at the foot of a rugged mountain. So tiny was it in comparison with the mountain that it seemed almost microscopic. The mountain towered skyward till its mighty peaks pierced the clouds. At this point. it divided and shot upward into two enormous crags resembling human forms. So high were they that in stormy weather they were always hidden from view and they looked down to see the winds raging about their knees. In fair weather they could be seen leaning together in sociable contemplation of all the world at their feet. Beneath these two figures the mountain sides shouldered out in vast piles of rock and naked boulders, like knotted muscles of a colossus from which long ridges of sinew ran downward half way to its base, to where nature had clothed its huge sides with the green and the brown of living and dead forests. Here and there white patches of granite glanced out from beneath the folds of green, as though, during the struggle with the elements of nature, the giant had been wounded, and robbed of part of his

dress. On the side of the mountain facing the south and overlooking the hut was a broad expanse of black rock, presenting a smooth surface which resembled a face of huge masonry. In one section of this black rock there was a sheer drop of one hundred and fifty feet At the top and near the center was a depression that ran downward, and was deeply cut into the face of the rock, a pathway worn by many centuries of rainy seasons. When the rains sent their flood over mountain and valley, a torrent poured down this water way. At the top, it was a noisy, uproarious flood, and leaping from the cliff it spread out fan-shape till, in its downward plunge to a point fifty feet below the brink, it struck the face of the rock, and rebounding, shot forward into a broad sheet, and, near the ground, thinned into innumerable tiny threads, the play-thing of the wind, swinging here, there, yonder; light and graceful as a thing of life, playing with the rays of the sun; now encircled with a golden bow, then retreating within the shadows of the overhanging cliff', white and ghost-like. So light and airy was this water wraith, so ready to invite a caress, that it was called Maiden Falls. But woe to the man who might get beneath her dainty feet.

In stormy weather, when the winds hurtled up through the mountains, and heavy clouds tugged and wrung at their peaks, curious sounds were heard, a long, low bellowing, that rose and fell with dreary persistence and ended with a sigh. In explanation of this strange phenomenon, the people said it was the sound made by demons sliding down Black Rock over Maiden Falls. The moaning was the sound of the sleds of the rollicking crew as they shot downward, and the sigh was an echo vibrating through distant mountain peaks. If you should be so skeptical as to doubt the truth of this explanation of these strange sounds, you would be met with a glance of pity at your ignorance. It would be stoutly maintained that dark forms, engaged in their hilarious game, had been witnessed on stormy nights by many. But if positive proof was the only kind of evidence that would satisfy your foolish doubt. you might climb the side of the mountain and see for your self the sled-like rocks under the feet of the Maiden. On inspection you would discover that the sleds were worn thin and smooth through many centuries of use by these frolicing midnight riders. If further proof were needed to satisfy your stubborn doubt you would be invited to examine both sides of the bed of the stream where the water shot downward over the face of the rock. You would note that here and there were streaks and white splashes from the hands and long nails of this strange crew as they balanced themselves by a touch of the hand during their downward course.

This mountain represents one peak that stands out above all the rest of the range. It appears as a sentinel watching over the peace of the

great army of slumbering mountains, hills, and knolls that lie twisted in all sorts of grotesque contortions below this one hoary head. To an observer standing on the shoulder of this mountain and looking northwest, the mountain range with its narrow valleys seems to rise and stretch upward to the horizon. Winding down from that distant point could be seen, at the date when the incidents of this story occurred, a silver thread, lost yonder behind an obtrusive mountain, again showing there, along a narrow strip of valley, lost again in a sharp turn, now glistening near on an elevated plateau, vanishing beyond a rugged mountain crest, at last reappearing at the observer's feet. Above this point, tower the two huge spurs already described. below which glistens the long slope of Black Rock leading to Maiden Falls. The shoulder of the mountain was the divide over the range, and the silver thread marked the path where during thousands of years of travel. the sandaled feet of man had worn its way into the granite surface. At the head of Maiden Falls was a stretch of sloping rock and, where the path crossed this water way, the rock was so precipitous that travelers had pried loose boulders and shelving bits of rocks and piled them up on the side of the path. They were held in place by roots, sods, and loose earth carried from long distances. It would happen sometimes that the rains of summer washed out the earth and then the whole mass would thunder down Maiden Falls. At other times only a portion of the embankment would be washed away leaving a trap for travelers who had the hardihood to attempt the pass at night. From this point the road zigzagged down the mountain, making, in its descent, three times the direct distance to the bottom. The path at last wound around the side of the mountain and passed within fifty feet of the Falls, then it rose over a slight elevation and ·finally plunged down an- other interminable descent till at last it passed the hut at the bottom.

We have been somewhat particular in describing this mountain and Maiden Falls, as here occurred certain events of the history which we are about to relate that has made Maiden Falls a dread so that to this day many speak of her with bated breath.

The hut at the foot of the mountain had stood there two thousand years, so declared the occupant, and to prove his assertion he would, on occasion, bring from a dust filled corner a book, some of the leaves of which were old, so very old that they were yellow and the edges were ragged with handling. while other leaves of the book were white, and written with great neatness, evidently by the present occupant. The hut had been owned, so the book declared, by the Kim clan for eighty generations. If any one should have the hardihood to suggest that the new straw on the roof, and the sound condition of the timber did not suggest

such great age, the owner would look with pity or contempt upon such an one as if an explanation was an insult to ordinary intelligence.

"Of course," he would say, "there has occasionally been a beam, post, or rafter replaced. Now and then the thatch has been renewed and again, as the prosperity of the clan changed, it would be replaced with tiles. You yourself," he would exclaim with growing earnestness, "eat, sleep, grow, change, but through it all, year after year, you are still yourself. So with this house of my ancestors. While the mountain is torn by storm and frost and acres of it are hurled into the valleys year by year changing its form. my house has remained through the past centuries built up by the undying hand of man."

A half mile away, just where the road sank from sight over a bluff, a cloud of smoke hung heavily in the air, marking the site of a village. On Sundays a white flag bearing the Maltese cross struggled upward through the heavy billow of smoke. It marked a Christian chapel, and took the place of a bell to call the people to worship.

The man who represented this ancient clan, and appeared at the time of our history as a bubble delayed on the vast receding tide of his race, was named Kim. When free from the duties of the paddy field, he might be seen sitting on the floor of his hut writing notes in the clan history or committing to memory passages of the Chinese classics. His calm imperturable face, and his grave demeanor, gave him the name of Buddha. He was not an old man but his brain was very ancient. It had taken toll of all that he had read in the classics and was the aggregate of all the traditions and superstitions of his ancient clan. Some of those who had written their record in the clan book had been brave men ready to fight the mountain tiger or sacrifice for right and truth, and, we venture to assert, that before the events of this history are all recorded it will be proven that Mr. Kim was not a coward. In some western lands where the command to earn one's bread by the sweat of one's brow is taken with such earnestness as to mean the earning of bread for the succeeding generations, Mr. Kim would not be charged with being over ambitious, but in a land where to have an extra bag of rice was a temptation to the officials to arrest and squeeze the owner out of that bag, a due portion of time spent in deciphering the meaning of Chinese characters is a highly laudable manner of spending one's life.

In every particular, Mr. Kim was in direct contrast to his wife. She was thin and sharp of face, sharp of disposition, and her tongue was sharper than either. To some persons she might seem less attractive than many other women, but if such a thought ever crossed the mind of Mr. Kim he never gave a hint of its presence; indeed while Asiatic

imperturbability prohibited any suggestion of emotion on his part, Madam Kim sometimes had a lively suspicion that he really liked her. It is related that on a certain time when family infelicities resulted in high words on her part and volumes of tobacco smoke on his, a neighbor had the hardihood to suggest that Mr. Kim follow the custom of all well regulated homes and punish her into submission and good temper. It is also reported that the neighbor escaped with his life, but so terrified was he at Mr. Kim's fury that he never ventured near his home thereafter, and some slanderous tongues said that he would always take a side street when he saw that gentleman coming his way.

At the time when our history opens, a great change had come over Mr. Kim. For many days he had taken no interest in the writings of Confucius and Mencius, but frequently sat for long periods in his door gazing persistently at the smoke that floated over the village below. His attention to the village smoke and his disregard of the paddy fields caused Madam Kim a great deal of uneasiness and her words were sharpened to a surprising degree.

## CHAPTER II MR. KIM BECOMES A CHRISTIAN

Mr. Kim had been sitting in his accustomed place on a mat in one end of the room. It was on that part of the floor known in the Korean language as the seat of honor. It always happened, because of its location directly over the fire place, to be the hottest place in the floor. Being a warm June morning, the perspiration rolled in profusion from Mr. Kim's head band, but he did not seem to know that the floor was hot. He was writing imaginary Chinese characters on the palm of his left hand with one of the digits of the right. Suddenly the door swung open and a shrill voice called out:

"What are you there for? You lazy thing, you unhatched egg! You rotten cabbage! you—you eat while I slave!"

Madam Kim had spent most of the morning in the paddy field hoeing and weeding rice. She had wondered what had become of the head of the home, who should have followed her to the field, and she had returned to find out the reason of his absence.

Mr. Kim evinced no concern over the interruption of his meditations. There was a moment's silence, then a head and pair of shoulders shot up into the door way. Mr. Kim glanced up as a shadow fell across his imaginary writing. He held his finger poised in midair and looked absently past the sharp featured woman in the door way. At that

moment a breeze pounced upon Madam Kim's dishevelled hair and flung it out in wiry tangles and tufts. "You," she cried, and each particular hair rose up threateningly, "You eat, you sleep, you wear holes in the mat, you withered bean stalk! you pig! you c-a-t!" Her voice ended in a scream as she clambered up into the room.

Mr. Kim's eyes came slowly back from the distance and rested on the frouzy head of his irate wife, and leisurely passed down over her mud-bespattered clothes to her bare shins and water soaked feet.

Madam Kim paused in her position of advantage to get breath preparatory to a second onslaught, while Mr. Kim brushed the perspiration from his forehead and again returned, undisturbed, to his imaginary writing. After repeated futile explosions, Madam Kim sat down in the middle of the floor and watched her husband's pantomime. She really thought him a wonderful man and did not much care if she did work hard for him. Every woman from the days of Confucius had slaved for her husband and why not she. It was wonderful how he could make Chinese characters on the palm of his hand, without making a mark, and yet know what they meant. She had seen him even trace the outline of Chinese characters in mid air, while discussing something with a neighbor, and the neighbor could read them. Perhaps it was the knowledge of his own greatness in this particular, that led him at times to use the art to mollify his irate wife.

She would not go to the field again that day. What could any one do, any way, when the head of the home spent his time writing Chinese characters on the palm of his hand.

"I have it," Mr. Kim said at last, "I have it right here."

"Have what?" Madam Kim gasped, uncertain whether he meant that he had a centipede or the smallpox.

"I have the right characters, they mean clean and holy," and his fingers described with vigor what he meant.

"Hump," was Madam Kim's disgusted reply, "you have been down to the church."

He had, indeed, been attending the church services. He had heard a great medley delivered by one of his countrymen. Adam was the first man, ancestor to the Koreans, Americans, English, Germans, French, Chinese, Japanese, and even the Russians. There was once a great flood and Noah had made a boat that had saved Shem who was the father to the Korean people. Abraham, Moses, and Confucius were all great men together.

Mr. Kim had dreamed over the matter all night, and had been sitting through the greater part of the forenoon trying to trace his ancestors

back to those notable persons. It was a failure. Abraham and Moses did not exactly fit into his clan. The last words of the preacher, however, though seemingly added to the discourse as an after thought, stuck to his mind, and he had been struggling with the characters "clean" and "holy" for the last hour.

"I tell you what," he said to his unsympathetic wife, "I have heard a great deal about being holy. Holy is holy whether it is made by studying Confucius, or trusting in the new religion, and I am going to--" Here Mr. Kim glanced up and the expression on his wife's face forced him to a pause.

"Ha-a-a." said she, in a long guttural dissent. "You think I know nothing? I have talked with them too. Holy doesn't mean sitting on the floor all day long and making rat tails in the air with your fingers, or strutting about stiff kneed in a white coat that your wife has blistered her fingers in ironing. It means getting into the paddy field till you are mud to the chin. Holy on the inside and mud on the outside is all right. The teacher told me so."

"Fool," said Mr. Kim, "fool woman, prating about things of which you know nothing. mixing religion with paddy field mud!"

There were symptoms in Madam Kim's face of a gathering storm which he knew by experience would be beyond the power of Chinese characters to hypnotize: so he arose and strode out, scorning the disagreeable question of paddy fields. Madam Kim watched her husband march down to the spring, his head high and his starched coat standing out with aggressive dignity. She was proud of him and had always tried to obey him, for that is women's lot, and she knew that she always would.

Mr. Kim was in earnest The following night just before twelve o'clock, when all was quiet. save the barking of a dog in the neighboring village, he might have been seen creeping from the shadows of his own house, and out across the moon-lit fields, bareheaded, to the spring. His strident step was gone. He glanced this way and that as if in terror of being discovered, and crawled along in the shadows like a thief. The hoot of an owl filled him with panic. But Mr. Kim had a high purpose that neither the hoot of owls nor cry of demons could change. He soon stood over the spring and waited eagerly for the moment of midnight when the water spirit should flash out deep in the water. He would make his vow over the water and ask for help, then wash in the stream and pray to the Christian's God. He lay long over the water, his eyes down to its surface, till his joints stiffened with the effort. "Hump," he grunted at last in disappointment, "fool devil, mad because I am going to be a Christian." He seized a stone to hurl it in the water, but thinking better of the matter

dropped the stone gently to the ground.

The next morning he put on his stiffened white coat, but Madam Kim scenting symptoms of more rat tails in the air, saw to it that he accompanied her to the paddy field. He worked with unusual silence and found unwonted comfort in his pipe.

"I will do it," he declared at last with energy as he hurled a huge bundle of weeds to the distant bank.

"*Hugh*?" Madam Kim said, straightening up and looking him over. "Skull cap on in the mud!" she exclaimed, "where is your head cloth?" Then she opened her mouth wide in astonishment, and closed it again as if she had lost the power of speech.

"It's wire," he said, answering her look. "Wire!" she gasped.

"Yes, wire, don't you see? '. he continued. "I have woven the cross in my skull cap, from a piece of copper wire. It is the sign of the Christians, and I am a Christian; I began yesterday, and I want you to begin too. You must go home and take a bath and begin today."

"Ha-a-a!" said she, and dove for a weed with such energy that mud and water plastered her front with a new coat. "Do you hear?" he repeated. "I expect you to do the doctrine." Madam Kim pulled weeds with increased energy. "It is easy," he added, "you just believe, that is what they say. I haven't learned all about it yet, but the Chinese character says it is to be clean, and I heard the preacher say so too. You must take a bath and then pray. You had better go home now. Supposing you should die?" he added anxiously, "You could not go to heaven with me." Here he paused at the startling thought of a family mix-up. Then he looked hard at the stooping figure of Madam Kim. She was working like a fury and her back was radiating wrath from every fold of her tight drawn garments. He watched her for a moment and then stealthily worked his way to the bank on the farthest side of the paddy field from Madam Kim. He pulled his long pipe from the waistband of his trousers and immediately was lost in a profound contemplation of tobacco smoke.

Mr. Kim became very earnest. He committed many hymns that would fit the only tune that he knew, which was a tune of his own invention. He secured other books and consulted teachers, but his wife still remained obdurate. He said "please," once, but after the first shock of surprise she was as hostile as ever. She would not attend the chapel services, and the morning devotions of her husband she scorned. Mr. Kim finally presented himself to his pastor for examination for the rite of baptism. Some of the questions were searching, and some of them cut closer to his manner of daily living than was pleasant.

"Yes," he said, "I have read the New Testament through and can

answer all the questions of the Catechism, attend church every Sabbath and Wednesday night, and I pray daily. I have thrown away all my fetishes and pass devil trees with-out thinking of them and am in harmony with all my neighbors."

"Do you work steadily and industriously in the fields? ,.was asked.

"Y-e-e-s," he hesitatingly replied, "my wife helps me to do so."

"Do you get angry? "

"Not as much as I did," he replied uneasily, "my wife however, tempts me in that direction sometimes."

"Are all the members of your family Christians? "

Mr. Kim did not reply for some time. He twirled his fingers and cleared his throat, and when he spoke it was with an apprehensive look on his face. He had not thought of Madam Kim's non-belief as standing in the way of this much coveted privilege.

"My wife hasn't given in yet," he replied at last with an effort.

After a long exhortation regarding a Christian's relation to the members of his family and his duty to win them to the faith, it was suggested that he wait one or two months before being baptized. Mr. Kim replied with a dutiful "yea," but his heart sank within him.

"I will try," were his farewell words. There was a tone of quiet decision that pleased the ears of his pastor, but would have startled the lady whom it concerned if she had heard it. Some of the neighbors had called him "Crazy Kim" because of late he sang at the top of his voice wherever he went. They noted his silence as he walked homeward on this particular afternoon, and wondered. That evening he filled his pipe industriously till Madam Kim choked with the smoke, then he laid his pipe aside and looked at her a long time. "Nomi," he said softly. She started violently. It was the first time he had called her by that name since they had built play-houses of mud in the village streets many years ago. "Nomi," he repeated persuasively, "won't you do it? "

"Do what?" she asked.

"They said today that I could not be baptized because you had not given in." A sudden stiffening of her shoulders was his answer. "From the days of Confucius," he continued with a touch of severity, "there has not been a woman who has not obeyed her husband. The man must determine what religion shall be used in his house. What do women know besides washing, cooking, eating, or pulling weeds in the paddy fields," he added generously.

A long silence followed during which Madam Kim swayed her body back and forth with the rhythm of a clock's pendulum, and the mat

on which she sat seemed to stir aggressively.

"Mind," said he, "in the morning when I command you-- you come in to prayers. Do you hear?" Madam Kim made no reply, and Mr. Kim congratulated himself that there had been no scene. Presently she turned her back on him. He could always read more defiance from her back than he could from her face, and it worried him, and that night the coming struggle got into his dreams.

The morning meal passed in profound silence. When it was over Mr. Kim said with studied gravity, "Come, now, it is time to pray." There was silence a few moments during which Madam Kim gazed across the little table at her husband, her eyes narrowed down to tiny points; then at a bound she was out into the yard and the door slammed behind her.

Mr. Kim laid out the Bible and hymn book very leisurely, then went out into the yard. Madam Kim was on the point of leaving for the paddy field. He walked across the yard to where she stood, quietly, as if bent on some benevolent purpose, and raising his hand struck her a resounding blow across the cheek. She sprang back against the wall astonished, and the blood mounted her swarthy face; darkened her brow and temples to the roots of the hair; her lips parted showing two rows of white teeth, and her eyes shot fire. Her shoulders and arms were bare and her short skirt revealed feet and legs bare to the knees. She crouched, lithe and strong, and, like an animal at bay, looked him over piece by piece. He approached her again with the same benevolent expression. "Come in now and pray," said he. The last word choked in his throat. Madam Kim shot out from the wall like some wild thing,—not her hands or her feet, but the whole of Madam Kim. She seized him by the top-knot and screamed at the top of her voice. Handfuls of hair, dark brown mixed with gray, floated about the compound. They did not belong to Madam Kim; her's was as black as a raven. Her tongue, tuned to a dialect created for the purpose of reviling, was set loose. The neighbors heard and marveled. Mr. Kim tried to lay hold of her but she was elusive. His eyes smarted, nose bled, and at last, bewildered. he sat down on what he took for a stone, but which proved to be an open pickle tub. In his confusion he did not know what had attacked him; then he saw Madam Kim pass out of the compound, and remembered. In due time he discovered he was sitting in a pickle tub, got up and wrung out his trousers. He then retired within the house but presently came out, and, let it be said to his credit, with the benevolent expression still on his face, though somewhat marred by scratches and bruises. He did not go to the paddy field, but to a neighbor who was a doctor. He asked for the longest surgical needle the quack had.

"I have a patient of my own," said he, "and need a good needle."

When Mr. Kim declined alike to explain, or accept assistance, the man was inclined to be offended until the condition of Mr. Kim's face suggested to him that the patient was not a sick man.

Late in the forenoon Mr. Kim took his place in the paddy field by the side of Madam Kim, but without a hint of the morning's incident When she glanced into his face, however, it worried her. She had never seen that look there but once before. That was years ago when a tiger had carried off a neighbor. Mr. Kim had shouldered a spear and announced that he would return with the tiger's skin, and he had done so. All day his voice was subdued and really gentle, yet the following night fear disturbed her sleep, and the morning meal was prepared with many a nervous jerk and start.

"Nomi," said he gently, when the morning meal was over, "yesterday you did not pray when I suggested it, but you will this morning," and he drew out from his waistband the long surgical needle and felt of its sharp point. Madam Kim sprang through the open door but found the compound door locked. Mr. Kim very leisurely arranged his books then stepped slowly out into the yard. Madam Kim was again at bay, but fled on his approach. He did not hurry, but holding the needle at arm's length, half stooping he followed her around the compound. She dodged and tried to seize the needle, but it left its mark in the palm of her hand and she fled again; around and around she went and he followed. She attempted to defend herself with her tongue, but she had long ago used up all her strongest expletives, and now, the crucial time they had no effect. Wherever she went the needle. was behind her, coming, incessant, relentless. The expression on Mr. Kim's face frightened her. If he would only rave she could understand, but that look of benevolence, how she hated it! The full purpose behind the mask filled her with fear. Suddenly terror seized her and she sprang into the room and closed the door, but before she could fasten it he crowded in, and motioned her to sit down. She did so, and he stuck the long needle back into his waistband. He then took up the Bible and read a passage of Scripture and ordered Madam Kim to kneel. She did so, and in the prayer he said "O Lord, I thank you that Nomi has begun to believe."

Madam Kim did not give up without further struggle, but Mr. Kim was really a great man and was resourceful, so that, every morning thereafter she waited with sullen face while her master prayed. Two months later Mr. Kim walked ten *li* with joyous steps to meet his pastor, and was eager for the examination to begin. He had faithfully worked up the weak points, and when it came to the question regarding his family he was triumphant. When asked how Madam Kim had been led to believe, he

hesitated and then told the whole story, and wound up his rehearsal with the assertion that she had been a good Christian ever since. The result was quite different from what he had expected. When another period of probation was prescribed. the shock of disappointment was painful.

The evening of his return, he moved very softly about the house and Madam Kim was surprised to see him dis- regard the points of the compass when he knelt for prayer; neither the North nor the South was honored. He knelt in the middle of the floor with his face down to the mat. A sob shook his burly frame, then the hard look left Madam Kim's face. During the night she awoke and saw him sitting beneath the lighted lamp looking at her. The next morning he tried to arrange the books on the floor as usual, but his hands shook and there was an awkward pause. At last he straightened up and after several efforts pulled the long needle from his waistband and handed it to her, but Madam Kim did not take it.

"You needn't pray any more if you don't want to," he said, "and I will never strike or prick you again; --and Nomi, I have been thinking you remember how we played in the streets making mud houses, years ago? Your face was prettier than all the rest and I liked you. Then when we were older and our parents arranged for our marriage you pretended that you had never known me, but I knew what you meant and was glad.

"The pastor told me that I must love you. That is easy. I always did that; but he said that it must be on the outside where you could see it; and that loving is better than praying. And, Nomi, I will." After a pause he continued, "I wish you had a real name. I don't like to call you by a name that has in it a meaning of contempt. They give names to the women when they are baptized, beautiful ones, like Truth, Perseverance, Peace, but then—you will not give in and be a Christian, so can not be baptized, and I will not make you."

"But I will," said Madam Kim.

## CHAPTER III A CHANGE OF OCCUPATION

Three years had now passed and many changes had taken place in Mr. Kim and his wife and also in their home. The straw on the roof of the house had been replaced with tiles. Bright clean paper glistened on the walls, and carefully oiled paper covered the once dust laden floor, which gave the home an appearance that called in the less thrifty neighbors to enjoy the cozy atmosphere of the home. The yard had been swept clean and a flower bed took the place of the pickle tub in the middle of the compound. Madam Kim had shaken all the frouziness out of her hair,

combed it back straight and plastered it down, giving it a look of severity suggestive of her own decided nature. A neat fitting jacket now covered her shoulders and arms, and her feet were carefully sandaled. Mr. Kim had seemed to expand greatly since his wife had "given in." His face was all aglow and his white starched suit stood out with greater dignity than ever.

It was late in the afternoon on the Sabbath, and he had been striding back and forth in the yard in front of Madam Kim who sat in the door way. He was profoundly happy, and she was happy and proud too.

"It is all wonderful, Nomi."

"Not Nomi," she corrected with a hint of the old irritation in her voice.

"Oh, yes, I know," said he half reproachfully, "I know that your name is Patience but when I say 'Nomi' somehow we get nearer together just as we did years ago in the village street. And this is another beginning!" he exclaimed and he watched the light spring up in Madam Kim's face, and added, "How could the Missionary think of me among all the thousands from whom he has the opportunity to choose; strange he should think of me as a coming preacher."

Mr. Kim paused and looked deprecatingly at his wife and continued, "He said hat I was good and could talk well," here Mr. Kim laughed with genuine mirth, "why", said he, "the last time I tried to talk to the people I forgot all about the congregation except the big red faced Yi wha gets drunk and beats his wife; indeed, I did not 'preach to any one but to him. and when he stared back into my face and his big lower lip dropped and he began to cry, I noticed the other people and felt scared, and as for goodness—," here Mr. Kim felt in his waistband for his pipe, then remembered that it had been two years since he had given up the habit of smoking. He had paused in his walk and was looking Patience steadily in the eyes and said "Shall I do it? For reply she gave her head a toss. The question had in it a hint of a desire for a compliment. Madam Kim was the last person in the world to tell him that he was either good or could talk well. Instead of running the risk of flattering any vanity remaining in Mr. Kim's nature she did the next best thing, she announced that the evening meal was ready. Over their bowls of rice where, as usual, a word settled most of their difficult questions, she said in her sharp decisive tones, "You know you will do it. Does a husband come to his wife to get permission?

He was satisfied, for he knew that before Madam Kim had 'given in,' under any similar request for approval, he would have found it convenient to go out and sit by the spring to escape her sharp tongue. After a long pause he said:

"It will be a long walk, eight hundred li, and I will not dare wear my white coat, but you had better put it in my bundle. It will be a long time before I get back. Ten years since we were married, Patience," he added reflectively, "and 1 don't like to leave you. I will try to forget-not really forget you," he hastily corrected, "but I will try not to think of you overly much—I mean I will not feel too bad.· You will not forget to put my Bible, hymn book and tablet in the bundle? and you will keep the weeds out of the rice? Of course you can do that almost as well as I. Don't forget my pencil," he said with a spirit of concern, while holding the articles named in his hands. "We have been happy since we became Christian, and I am only just going to take a bit of it to others. You will not mind, will you, Patience?"

That night when Mr. Kim laid out his books for evening prayers he drew from the leaves of his little red covered Bible a carefully folded sheet of paper. He touched it reverently and then spread it out on the floor. He examined it carefully, read and re-read the beautiful Chinese characters, and with his fingers traced the marginal embellishments.

"It is for a whole year," he explained to Madam Kim," and it authorizes me to preach anywhere in the whole world, wherever I may travel. Think of it, rank from the government would be of value only in our own country, but this parchment makes me a preacher anywhere in the world."

"But," said Madam Kim, "it does not mean rank, it means work,—work as you would work in the paddy fields; it means a permission to be plastered and daubed, a chance to sweat, a chance to be hated, stoned, killed!" and Madam Kim shook her head at him in her old irate way.

Mr. Kim looked at his wife uneasily. "I know," he said at last with a faraway look, "it does frighten me,—no, no," he added as if in reply to a question, "it is not the stones, nor is it the hate, but it is the,—I am afraid of men."

Madam Kim raised her eyebrows in sudden surprise. "Why," said she, "you are not afraid of tigers."

"No," he replied, "but I am afraid of men."

The next day Mr. Kim might have been seen plodding southward. It had been raining the night before and he was trying to pick his way along the sides of the road. In spite of all his care the immaculate suit began to show signs of distress. The yellow streaks grew higher towards his knees and the flap of his long coat would have set Madam Kim's nose skyward if she had seen it. For the twentieth time the mud had pulled off his sandal and as many times he had patiently worked it back on

his foot. Suddenly the soil turned from yellow to red and the road led out across a plain. Mr. Kim sank to his ankles and lifted his feet with a soughing sound. Suddenly he gave up picking his way, and straightening his shoulders deliberately swung out into the middle of the road, splashing mud to his waist A sudden splash in his rear caused him to look around. A stranger was trying to follow him but still clung to the road side. Mr. Kim looked the man over from head to foot, he looked at his own bespattered garments, and then back at the stranger.

"I say, Stranger," said he, "come down off from it, the road is softer than the bank." The man paused with one foot lifted, looked at the road then far out ahead at the dismal swamp that lined both sides, and without a word stepped in behind Mr. Kim.

"You see," continued Mr. Kim, "it is just as one regards it. I have made up my mind that this is good walking. Of course my feet are somewhat soaked but they have been that way many times in the paddy fields, and my coat has been blacker than it is new, moreover, there are many things for thought that are a real pleasure, so you see I am quite as comfortable as if I were sitting on the warm floor of my own house."

Mr. Kim spoke with one finger extended and emphasized each word with a motion forward as if he had some idea of stabbing that gentleman with his finger, and he raised his voice as though he were addressing a company. The man looked at Mr. Kim doubtfully till his eyes traveled down to a bundle on Mr. Kim's back where a small red Testament peeped out.

"O, I see," he exclaimed, "you are not really crazy, you are one of them, aren't you? "

"Not crazy?" said Mr. Kim in astonishment, "but who do you mean by 'one of them'?"

"Pardon me," said the stranger, "we have not formally made each other's acquaintance, but am I mistaken in taking you for one of these Gospel talkers?"

"I preach some times," said Mr. Kim with dignity, as he turned his back on the stranger and strode off through the mud.

"There you are stepping on it," exclaimed the stranger, his voice raised in a sharp threatening condemnation.

"H-a-a-a!" said 'Mr. Kim, in a spirit of panic, and raised his muddy sandal to which was plastered a large sheet of paper that had been coated with fresh boiled rice. He pulled it hastily from the bottom of his sandal.

"I did not see it," he exclaimed, "who would have thought that people would have come out here in the mud to sacrifice."

"Sacrifice!" echoed the other, "don't you see that hill yonder, and the village there running in line with it? Have you no sense? There is calamity in that village, sickness, death perhaps. Why should they not come out in the mud to petition the spirits to open the sluices of the hill that its strength may· flow downward to heal the villagers of their misery?"

The man spoke rapidly and with growing heat. "You Christians," he continued, "trample upon our sacrifices! upon our traditions which are as old as the mountains, and upon the traditions of our ancestors; you expose us to the wrath of the spirits by creating disloyalty to these things; you enter our homes and divide our families; our wives and our children become enamored of this new doctrine and, furthermore, they are no more to be reclaimed than if they were in their graves."

This explosion on the stranger's part was aimed at Mr. Kim's back, as he had again turned and was plodding ahead through the mud. For a few moments he felt helpless under the attack. He was not unfamiliar to this method of argument, but he had never had it hurled at him with such bitterness and he marveled much that the stranger had ignored the proprieties of a formal greeting before raising such a fierce argument.

"Strange," said Mr. Kim gently at first, turning in his tracks and looking the other man over, "I did not mean to offend, and as for the question that you have raised, it is just this way, if you will permit me to reply by means of an illustration. I have had some acquaintance with Western Foreigners, and among them are some physicians and surgeons; on occasion I have been called upon to stand by and watch the surgeon do his work. A diseased limb which under the treatment of our physicians proved fatal, in his hands the patient is saved by having the limb cut off. Now Korea is sick unto death and in order to heal her she must have some of her rotten limbs cut off and thrown away. Of course it hurts, but think of the benefit. It will give the people life—but what is more to the point it will give everlasting life to the man who suffers the losses of these ancient things provided he obtains the life that the one Great Physician can give. Now what the Christians do is in love," here Mr. Kim's oratorical voice returned to him, and placing his hand on his hip as his teacher often did while teaching and preaching, he ended with a flourish, "Yes, we Christians love every one—we love our enemies."

"Love," the other repeated in deep disgust, "love—that is if you love my wife."

"Your wife," said Mr. Kim with a gasp of astonishment, "I never saw your wife, and I have one of my own. I never saw you before." Here he checked himself, and the stranger broke in as if he had not been

interrupted.

"When she goes to church she sits in a room where she can see the preacher's face and then explains away the shame of it by saying that the Christians love each other. Your own words just now prove the wickedness of your deed ..:... You said that you had not seen her, with the inference that you love not those whom you do not see, so the Christians do not love from principle, eh? they love from contact. I will not have it!" he continued with growing anger, "l will kill her!"

Mr. Kim, recalling his own foolish and futile struggles with Madam Kim, swung into the middle of the road again too bewildered to reply. The stranger was a small wiry man of about thirty five. He stood at least six inches shorter than Mr. Kim. His head was high and narrow, his nose crooked downward. His eyes were black and piercing, his hair, eyebrows, and beard was as black as a raven. His beard was carefully combed to a point below the chin but at the tips it fared rebelliously outward. He finally gave his name as Mr. Cho of Standing Stone. When he learned that Mr. Kim was from Rocky Ridge he smiled at the similarity of the names but when he learned that Mr. Kim was bound to pass through his town and, indeed, was expecting to stop to preach there the smile died on his lips.

Finally Mr. Kim ventured to say, "Stranger, it seems to me that it is not a question of obedience on either the husband's or the wife's side, but the sensible way in such matters is to find out the truth and then follow it whatever the cost. Water will not run up hill: no amount of fault finding will m:ike it, either. You would hardly think of taking a club and chastising a stream because it would not obey you; now, when a woman finds what she thinks is the truth, she will cling to it, beating will kill her but it will not change her any more than it will the course of a stream, because it is likewise against her nature."

'Think you are right about their being stubborn," said the little man, "married men all know that. l am weary of beating my wife, indeed I am at my wit's end, and the last time she went to church against my commands I chopped off one of her fingers; as it did no good I threatened to kill her. Look here, stranger," he continued, pointing his chin at Mr. Kim. "Answer now, do you Christians not beat your wives? Did you not beat your wife?"

Mr. Kim took several steps before answering, and then turned a half embarrassed look upon his companion.

"Did you ever hear of Paul," he began, when Mr. Cho broke in imperiously: "No evasion now, did you, or didn't you?" "As I was saying," continued Mr. Kim, undisturbed, "there was a man by the name of Paul

who wrote a good deal of what we know as our Sacred Book; in his reference to his non-christian life, he called himself the chief of sinners. I have possessed like distinction with this great man, but I have had even more reasons to be notorious than he, for I was in addition the chief of all fools. You may smile, humor is better than garrulity. The fact is I beat my wife to make her pray."

"Did she give in?" asked Mr. Cho with a hint of sympathetic interest.

"On the outside, yes, but on the inside, no more than does your wife. I gave in at last myself when I found the real truth; then when I asked forgiveness, she gave in and of her own free will became a Christian. I can understand," he added reflectively, 'how you beat your wife when she became a Christian, but I cannot understand how I beat mine for not becoming one. I think that I was never young. The substance of my brain was a filtered mass from my ancestry and it was always old. I conceived spiritual things only from the force of sledge hammer blows until one night-- "

"There you are again, berating your ancestors," exclaimed Mr. Cho. "I have not known you long but I venture the only wise thing you ever said was when you called yourself a fool. You confess that on a certain moment, after a few days of consideration, you threw away the teachings of thousands of years. A glass of wine will make a man of sober habits drunk and crazy and revile his ancestors; is that more than you have just done? though when I think of it," he continued with a sudden sparkle in his eyes, "the spirits of such an offspring would be content, did you never more prattle their names, and I have no doubt that in their bright conclaves they congratulate each other that they possess no descendants beyond the name of your father; so rattle on you bit of flotsam; you may have offspring, but you have no ancestors.'

Mr. Kim fought back the reply that sprung to his lips and plodded on, but down in his soul he resolved that by God's help he would win Mr. Cho to Christ. With that thought filling his mind with enthusiastic resolve he turned around and looked his companion over. Mr. Cho saw the resolve written in every line of Mr. Kim's face and defiance flashed out from the depth of his being and his eyes glittered dangerously. Not a word was spoken but the challenge was accepted as definitely as if it had been written in their blood. Mr. Kim turned and walked ahead a long time in silence but feeling greatly humbled for letting his manner betray his purpose. When he spoke again it was with great gentleness that should have disarmed even a fiercer spirit that Mr. Cho.

At the mid-day meat Mr. Cho spoke civilly and Mr. Kim hoped for

a reconciliation, but it was only a truce.

In the mid-afternoon the road turned westward and when their lengthening shadows stretched out behind them, a boy, with his hair down his back, stepped in behind Mr. Cho. The fluff, fluff, of his loose trousers as he kept pace with them irritated Mr. Cho. Suddenly he turned sharply on the lad and shouted:

"Get off from it! get off, I say!"

"Ya-e!" replied the bewildered boy looking down at his muddy feet and then up the back of Mr. Cho. Doubtful of what was meant he fell somewhat behind, but was directly plodding at their heels.

"Didn't I tell you to get off from it? Off I say, it is mine; you offspring of a plebeian—how dare you?'

The boy flushed up in his surprise and fell behind again.

Mr. Kim turned about with a surprised inquiry on his face.

"What is it?" he asked.

"What is it? What is it?" Mr. Cho repeated imitating

Mr. Kim's voice. 'It is my shadow. . He has been tramping with his dirty plebeian feet on my shadow. I won't have the insult," and the boy shrank farther back.

"On your shadow," repeated Mr. Kim. "Why you have been tramping on mine for the last two hours."

"That may be," replied Mr. Cho, "but I am a patrician," and he raised his short figure to its full height and expanded his chest, "I am a patrician and have not trimmed my little finger nails for ten years. Your hands proclaim you a son of toil. My ancestors, Sir, were of noble blood. Now what were yours?" and he looked up aggressively into Mr. Kim's face.

"Mine," said Mr. Kim, and he struggled to keep the note of danger from his voice. "Mine? I have the record which is two thousand years old. Five of my ancestors were generals in his majesty's army; three of them gave their lives for their kings and country; others rendered noble service and were not without reward. Noble rank has not passed our clan. And more, there never was one among them who was afraid of men, devils, or honest toil. Tell me about yours," he said, looking full into the other's face. The little man's eyes shifted before Mr. Kim's steady look.

"Just as I inferred," Mr. Cho replied, "these generals met their just reward by the unerring hand of Fate, the other two escaped because of mercy and not from merit. Ills that befall men in this life are their due. Calamity is not an accident, it is always just punishment. My ancestors have been people of peace. Fortune has recognized their merit and surrounded them with luxury. The tiled house, servants, and learning have

always been theirs. You think that I am traveling on foot because of a slim purse? If I had not scorned to do so I would have told you before that my donkey died and the driver stole my money. I tell you I never allow any man, old or young, large or small, to tread on my shadow."

"I am disposed," said Mr. Kim slowly, "to agree with your philosophy. The loss of your donkey was a just punishment from the unerring hand of Fate and the thief is guiltless in obeying the behest of Fate. And I think now that I ought to give you a good thrashing as it would satisfy a strong impulse of mine, and, as it would be a just act of Fate, you would get your desert. and I could by no possible reason be blamed. Indeed, if Fate rewards and punishes justly I should be greatly rewarded for such an act. Still I feel perplexed at the amount of punishment that Fate determines for you, as I can scarcely understand how so small a body can hold so much conceit."

Mr. Kim blocked the road and stood looking down on the top of Mr. Cho's head.

"There you are again," exclaimed Mr. Cho, "preaching love even for your enemies, and itching to beat one who compares ancestors with you. That is all your religion is worth. Bah! and you would force it upon other people!"

Mr. Kim turned abruptly in his path and walked on in silence, but finally turned to face his companion and said: "You are right, sir, and I wholly wrong. I am greatly humiliated. I beg of you not to do as I do but as I preach, or rather think not that my actions are an interpretation of the Gospel truth."

"Ugh!" said Mr. Cho, "concern not yourself, I care not for you, or your teaching. Would I sully my tongue by mentioning your doctrine with the name of Confucius? What recommendations has your faith ever made? You do not profess to live up to your teaching? Bah! you who profess to be a teacher! and you a descendant from so rare an ancestry!"

Mr. Kim strode on with new energy while his fingers contended with his conscience. The old Mr. Kim would have trounced the man, the new Mr. Kim did not dare, and great humility filled his head. The sinking sun lengthened the shadow of Mr. Cho and drove the boy far back across the plain and they traveled in silence.

The next morning Mr. Kim was not displeased that his road companion had met a friend who had loaned him money with which he had secured a donkey and would ride on ahead; but he knew that they would meet again, though he little knew then what such meetings would mean to them both.

## CHAPTER IV A NEW ACQUAINTANCE

On a certain mid-afternoon, Mr. Kim stopped at a village called School Hill. The name suggests a seat of learning, but the only visible sign of that character was a small hut in the midst of the town where he was greeted with an uproar of discordant voices from the throats of a score of boys who shouted Chinese characters while they industriously wiped the perspiration from their faces. The village lined the back of a stream and the houses were closely packed together, each buffeting its neighbor in the effort to get close to the water's edge. A few had boldly strode out over the brink of the stream and stood leaning backward as though struggling against the hustling of their neighbors which threatened to pitch them into the water. The streets were narrow their whole length, and in the center of the one down which Mr. Kim glanced as he strode into the town, was a hut which caused the street to dodge sidewise against the main row of houses. Such houses! They were dwarfs, with rugged shaggy backs; while their low thatched eaves delighted in seizing pedestrian horse-hair hats by the top and crushing them out of shape. Here and there a corner of a house shouldered out into the street compelling carriers, loaded with brush wood, to turn and sidle through the narrowed spaces.

The bridge that connected the town with the opposite bank had been removed in anticipation of the coming rainy season. The crotched limbs of trees that had been used as buttresses and the long poles that had been used as stretchers were piled in a great heap on the bank far above high water mark.

Mr. Kim examined the crossing and watched pedestrians struggling against the fierce current and concluded it would be well to attempt the crossing after he had become well rested from his journey, so he returned to the middle of the town. The sun was still high and beat fiercely into the narrow streets. Mr. Kim found an inn that boasted of as much heat and as many flies as any other in the town; in other words the place was popular, for if there are many guests there must be a constant fire under the house to prepare the food, and as for flies, they love the host who is not afraid of heat and knows how to entertain.

The town had flung its doors wide open for a breath of fresh air. A prankish breeze now and then stirred the dust of the street, sending it in tiny whirls skyward, or, seizing a dust laden bush, shook it, turning its leaves immodestly upward, and, flinging itself against an open door, slammed it in hot, expectant faces. Mr. Kim sat down with others and watched the breeze in its coy approaches and sighed when the inn across

the way received its fulsome visit. It plunged into the open door, lifted the corner of a mat on which visitors sat, peeped behind old earthen jars that sat in a corner, shuffled and laughed among the fetishes hung on the ceiling, and then noisily hurled itself out into the street, filling it with the odors of wine and tobacco, and then nimbly twirled off down the street.

"This world's blessings are captious," said Mr. Kim to his neighbor, "they come to some people and pass others who are just as good; but," he added meditatively, "perhaps there was some one in that inn who needed the breeze more than we did."

Again he glanced across the way, and a face appeared at the open window as though the owner had heard these last remarks. So strange, so ugly was it, that Mr. Kim stared back in fascinated wonder. It seemed to him as though one of the ugly pictures of the wayside shrines had taken life and stepping out had wandered to the inn. The stranger noticed Mr. Kim's curious gaze and scowlingly withdrew.

"Who is that man?" he asked of his neighbor.

"That," replied the man, 'is the devil. He lives out on a great salt marsh thirty li from here. He is a hermit."

"The devil?" replied Mr. Kim, "well, he does look like it. Lives alone did you say, has he no family?"

"No, had one."

"Had what?"

"A wife."

"Where is she?"

"Dead. Had daughter too."

"Where is she?'

"Dead."

"Did the devil do it?" asked Mr. Kim.

"Do what?"

"Kill them?'

"No, but some one seized the daughter, it is said, and carried her off and the devil went after them. The m:in who stole her has never been heard of since; no one has dared to say that the devil knows what became of him. The girl lived only a short time after the father brought her home. Fear won't kill suspicions, so the people think and think. I would not like to be the man who should fall under the hand of the devil. He has sworn further revenge."

"You say you would not like to fall in his power, why?"

"He could crush a man as you would a flea. He is more than man. I think he is a demon, yet, a gentle one when not angry."

When Mr. Kim reached the river the next morning, he found at his

side the strange creature he had seen through the window the night before. There were several young men who were willing to take passengers on their backs and carry them across the shallow river for a few cash each, but when they looked Mr. Kim's burly form over, they with one voice declined to undertake the task. "We will carry a man but not an ox," they said. Mr. Kim was about to sit down and take off his sandals and wade across, when the stranger without a word shambled in front of him and knelt with his back to Mr. Kim. His trousers were rolled to his body, showing muscles like those of an ox.

"You are kind," said Mr. Kim, "but I know you are a traveler as I am and I feel unwarranted in accepting such generous service," but the man still knelt without a word and his attitude was authoritative as well as generous. Mr. Kim clambered on to his back and was astonished at the ease with which the stranger straightened up and started out across the stream.

Mr. Kim carried his umbrella in one hand while he locked the other arm about the stranger's expansive chest. In the middle of the stream the current hurled itself terrifically against the man's legs and springing upwards splashed his trousers. He stood still a moment as if in debate regarding them, and then walked lightly on. Others were struggling alone and at times seemed on the point of being swept from their footing, while the short figure beneath Mr. Kim moved without effort. Presently Mr. Kim saw that his bearer's trousers' legs were slipping down into the water, so, with pardonable solicitude, he thrust the handle of his umbrella down and caught one with the hook and pulled it back into place while with the other hand he attempted to seize the other but in doing so flung out his own feet and dipped them both in the water. Mr. Kim clung on with the umbrella while the other trouser leg swung its broad expanse down stream. Their road companions were delighted at the sight of the huge man on a short man's back tugging away at the latter's trouser legs while his own were dripping with water.

"I have one of them," puffed Mr. Kim ruefully as he slid down from the stranger's back and untangled his umbrella. "Here," he added, addressing the crowd whose merriment was still in evidence, "they are like your natures. You have two, one is good and one is evil. The dry one represents the good and the wet represents evil. Now," he added, smiling at his companion, "if you will fix your mind upon the dry one you will forget the wet one. If you bend your thoughts upon your good nature you will not follow your evil one.' The stranger fixed his staring eyes on Mr. Kim's face and the latter began to regret that be had made an attempt at pleasantry.

"In that case," replied the strange creature who had not spoken a word since starting, "your nature must be wholly bad as both your feet are wet."

Mr. Kim glanced down, and with some embarrassment in his voice, said, "It was once wholly bad, but I trust it is now much better.' He was surprised at the seeming effort made by the stranger in speaking. The words came in long grating sounds down deep in the man's huge chest.

"Yes. I was of all sinners the chief," continued Mr. Kim, thinking more of the strange man before him than the passage he was quoting, or the evil of which he was guilty.

"Indeed," he added, noticing that he had an audience, "there was pardon, for me, and there is pardon for each one of you."

"What did you do," interrupted some one, "did you commit murder?"

"No."

"Did you steal?"

"O, no."

"Did you offend the governor or the magistrate?"

"Why, no, you see--"

"Did you commit some other great crime, did you try to stir up rebellion?'

·'No, no, I will tell you. I insulted God every day of my life. I ... "

"What a fool you must have been! crazy, weren't you? How did you do it? This way?" and a man shook his fist towards the sky.

"See here, friend," said another, "we are good citizens, and have no sins to be pardoned. We are not very brilliant, but we have learned to attend to our own business, and are not such fools as to offend the Government and run in danger of having our homes ruined, nor do we run about insulting the spirits, neither the chief who rules from the sky, nor his associates who live among men and in the shrines. No, sir, you must look elsewhere if you are looking for law breakers."

"Hold on, now," cried Mr. Kim in desperation, "you all talk at once and I have not a chance to tell you what I mean. I want to tell you who I am. I am a Christian."

"Ah," repeated half a dozen voices in concert, "that is so.

He has books on his back. He is a gospel talker."

"Yes. I am, and I want to tell you how I insulted God every day and how you insult Him every day of your lives."

They sat down on a bank near the river to replace their foot gear and he stood in front of them and insisted with great energy that they were all sinners and were insulting God. His fingers were on passages of

Scripture proving to them that his assertions were true. Then he named over their sins with startling self assurance; he left out none of their vices, nor one of the crimes that men are guilty of committing against their fellows.

"No use denying it," some one said with a grin, "we all do those things, more or less."

"It is pardon, I am talking about," almost shouted Mr. Kim.

"He is a professional talker,' some one interrupted, "and we have no chance against him. Where did he get it all?"

The company soon adjusted their foot wear and Mr. Kim followed at their heels as they filed off across the country. He continued his discourse and his voice reached down the line some distance and called forth a remark from first one and then another. Just ahead of him walked the man called Devil.

"I tell you," said Mr. Kim, after he had talked at length of their guilt, "You must be born again. You must be made over into new men."

"Would we be like you?" some one asked.

"Like me," was the hesitating reply, "I would not want you to be exactly like me, but I was born again. I want you to be just as you would be if you were born again," he explained lamely and wondered why he found such difficulties at the few questions hurled at him.

"Would we carry a foreign umbrella, or stab with our

fingers when we talk, or strike out with our fist, or lean one hand on our hips when we talk, and would we shout loud, just like the foreigners? Do you mean by being born again to be made something like the foreigner and something a little less than a Korean, is that it?"

For a time Mr. Kim was silenced, and resolved down in his heart that he would throw away his umbrella and remember that be was a Korean.

After two hours walk the company had turned off from the main road; then one dropped off here and another there till Mr. Kim was left with the man called the Devil as his only companion.

"In traveling to Rocky Ridge will my path lead me by your house?" finally asked Mr. Kim of the ugly creature ahead of him.

"Nearly," was the reply. "You walk down the salt marsh five *li* and then turn off to the right while I keep on a bit farther and then turn into the marsh." The man seemed to speak with effort but when he got started, made headway easily enough. At first his breath came in deep puffs and there was a harsh rumbling in his chest that sounded not unlike the growl of a wild animal. As he spoke, he turned his face toward Mr. Kim, who had been walking at his heels because of the narrowness of the path. The

way was called the main road, but its name did not at all describe the size of the road but simply the shortest one leading between two magistracies. As Mr. Kim glanced into the face of his companion the features gave him a new shock and he fell to wondering how it was that God made a human being so terrible. "Perhaps his heart belies his appearance," thought Mr. Kim, and under the impulse asked him of his family.

"I have no family," growled the man.

"Might have known that," he reflected, "who would marry his daughter to such a creature. Still I think I did hear that he once was married," and they walked on in profound silence. "Had all once," said the strange man at length breaking in upon Mr. Kim's reflections.

"Had what?" asked Mr. Kim.

"Family," was the reply and the ugly face turned upon him with a suspicious glance.

"Yes, yes, of course, I beg your pardon," said Mr. Kim. "Did your children die?' There was a silence for another period and then Mr. Kim heard a few deep guttural sounds, and the reply, "Died."

They continued some time in silence. Mr. Kim not knowing how to break the silence and the hermit showing no inclination to do so.

They were soon out on the border of the salt marsh, one of the most desolate scenes on earth. Mud stretched in every direction with now and then a tiny island of tough wiry grass. The plain stretched southward toward the sea, where a line of blue could be seen and a white speck here and there, denoting the presence of fishing craft Out on the plain in the center stood curious looking thatched buildings from whose eaves poured smoke, and Mr. Kim rightly judged them to be salt kilns. At a nearer point were standing small huts, and women could be seen at their daily toil about these dwellings. In some places, the houses were grouped together into villages, then again, they were scattered and lonely.

But that was not the only life that met Mr. Kim's eyes; the mud plain was covered with millions of crabs slipping and sliding through the soft ooze, here, yonder, everywhere. A bewildering mass of life struggling for their food before the incoming tide should force them into their homes of mud. The two men had walked for some time along the bank of this desolate marsh, when Mr. Kim's companion suddenly stopped and pointed to a road that turned off to the right. Mr. Kim thanked the stranger and was about to pass on, when the man spoke. "Would you like to see where I left my daughter, the last of my family? "

Mr. Kim was staggered at the question, and asked him to repeat it, as if he had not heard.

"You have neither gazed. at me in curiosity nor called me ugly,' he

said. "I think I would like to see you again sometime. Would you like to see where my daughter is?" he repeated in the same voice, and seemed to speak without moving his lips.

"Certainly, certainly," said Mr. Kim; "indeed I would."

The man turned down the side of the marsh and skirted its borders, and Mr. Kim followed, much wondering.

"It is not much out of your way,' the man remarked, not looking back, "you can make a short cut into the main road from this direction."

They traveled for about an hour in silence when they entered a clump of carefully tended pines. The ground was swept clean of all underbrush and twigs and the trees stood up lofty and rugged. In the center was a small opening where the sunlight poured directly downward upon a green mound. The hermit led the way to the mound and kneeling down by the side of it said:

"Here," and he passed his hand over the top of the mound, as if he were caressing someone that he loved very dearly.

"Yes, I laid her here and she sleeps very softly, and when I am tired I come here and lay my head down just above hers and then the trees above whisper in her own sweet voice; (My face is ugly but she never knew it) and their voices say 'I love you, I love you.' "

The strange creature seemed to have forgotten the presence of Mr. Kim, and he stroked the mound again. "Her face was beautiful-ah how beautiful. They took her from me and I brought her back, ruined." Then he glanced up at Mr. Kim. "I liked what you said to-day about the soul that never dies. She is here, but somehow I know she lives, but it is hard to leave her out alone in the storm and when the cold winds blow and the storm sweeps across the marsh and roars up among these pines. I come out here and lay my gray head down with hers and keep her company."

"I like, sir, what you said, that is why I brought you here. I never brought a man here before. Can you tell me more about her and where she is, and do you think I will see her again?" There was a world of wistfulness in his harsh voice, but his face changed not the slightest in expression.

Mr. Kim sat down on one side of the mound and the hermit leaned his ugly face across towards him from the other side and drank in the story that Mr. Kim had to tell. He looked at Mr. Kim and was lost in the thoughts of which he had never before dreamed. They sat there till the sun had settled far into the west. Then Mr. Kim arose to go. He had repeated the great plan of redemption and told again and again of the hope of the Christian beyond the grave. The hermit had asked no questions, but during the whole time did not take his eyes from the face of Mr. Kim. So still was

he that he seemed like some ugly bronze statue, and Mr. Kim more than once turned his face uneasily from the hermit's gaze. They arose from the ground together and the hermit glanced toward the sun and looked out at the distant blue sea, then at Mr. Kim, and then, out across the vast marsh towards a salt kiln. "Will you come with me to my home for our dinner?" the hermit asked. "I have done you ill service to ask you here and I had forgotten it was getting late."

"Oh, no," Mr. Kim protested, "I had rather spend the last two hours with you than do anything else on earth. To tell this story is my duty and my joy. I shall see you again," he said, and thanking the hermit for his kind invitation, turned off across the country with a rapid step, greatly musing on the ugly face and harsh voice and yet tender spirit of the hermit. He little thought of how much of his future would be mixed with the affairs of this strange man.

## CHAPTER V A WARNING

On arriving at Standing Stone Mr. Kim, filled with the enthusiasm of a new undertaking and urged by his old habit of doing things with a masterly spirit, plunged into his work with great energy. He first walk about the town, estimated the number of houses, took note of the stream that half encircled it, and the cliff that towered so high above that the sun glanced over its tops into the village two hours late in the morning. He walked through all the streets, observed the place where lived Mr. Cho, and rightly concluded from its appearance that the owner possessed great influence in the town. He visited the school house and in his masterful way won the admiration of the teacher who was a man of great age and should have died long ago, so the people said. Out of respect to his ancient white beard and hair; and dim eyes, they committed their sons to him to unravel for them the warp and woof of Chinese characters. He offered his school building for Mr. Kim's use.

The next day was market day with its crowds of curiosity seekers. "Who would miss a chance to listen to the preacher of the new doctrine, or any other fool thing that would give us a few moments diversion," they said.

Mr. Kim shouted a hymn so loud and furiously that soon a crowd filled the school building. They surged about the doors and windows in a restless eager mass. Many moistened the tip of a finger and rubbing a hole through the paper covering, placed an eye to the hole, so that in a few moments every possible point in the doors and windows possessed an eye.

The old teacher stormed at the crowd for destroying his windows but to no effect. So many faces pressed against the doors and windows that they darkened the room, while those who had been so fortunate as to get within, smoked with such prodigious industry that the strongest coughed and gasped for breath.

Mr. Kim was not seated, but stood erect with his head among the rafters of the house, shouting and gesticulating as he had observed done by his foreign pastors. His listeners were delighted. It was the best show that had been in the town since the oldest could remember. They giggled and laughed and jostled. Many on the outside caught snatches of what Mr. Kim was saying.

"Hark to that." said an old Grey Beard to his neighbor, "he is calling us all liars and cheats and blackguards, now where do you think he got his information? There—he says we steal, now that is a lie—I have stolen nothing since I was thirty, and I will be seventy next New Year. Ha-a-a! now did you hear that? that must mean you, neighbor, he says that you have been beating your wife." "Sure," said the other, "I had to make her mind."

"Look here, youngster,' said the old man reaching over with his long cane and punching a boy who had his face to the paper covered window and his eye glued to a hole, "what do you see, eh?" 'See" shouted the boy without removing his eye, "see? He has gone plum crazy. I can see him shake his fist and wrinkle up his face," and the young man gesticulated with his fist above his head, but without removing his eye from the hole. "He looks as if he were getting madder and madder. Whew! how he sweats!" There was a long pause and again the old man punched the lad. For reply the boy screwed himself close to the window and kicked his heels up in delight, and shouted, "He is telling them to get down on their knees and they are. . . "

"Are what?"

"Getting down." "Down where?"

"Down they go to the floor, all those nearest him have their heads on the floor and he is telling them to shut their eyes. Wonder what he will do to them next?"

Mr. Kim prayed an1 the people were bursting with merriment. There was a smothered laugh, followed by many more. Some reached for their long pipes and when Mr. Kim said "amen," they were puffing with new vigor and blinking through the clouds of smoke with unabated curiosity. When Mr. Kim urged them to become what he was, and adopt the new faith, they gradually slipped from the room and were soon back in the market place selling their wares.

When Mr. Kim left the village the next day the attitude of the people filled him with astonishment. They avoided him, and even the farewell of the school teacher was cold and distant. "The trouble must be deeper than the teacher's financial losses, Mr. Kim said to himself, as he had bought paper, and with the aid of the pupils restored the doors and windows to their original condition. Some who the day previous had sat long and talked sociably with him of the many things political and social, that charm the heart of the Korean, failed this morning to recognize his hearty greeting and moved out of their path to avoid him, and when some one shouted "Foreign Devil" he stood in his tracks in sheer astonishment. That he should meet opposition and difficulty was expected, but the hostility was far out of proportion to any evident cause.

As he approached the end of the street leading from the town, he saw a figure ahead of him dressed in the most costly silks and wearing a hat of the finest workmanship and walking with stiffened knees and the strident step of the gentry of the Capital. Mr. Kim recognized him as his road companion, but marvelled at this ostentatious display of himself on the street. The small man walked leisurely as if in profound indifference to his surroundings, and to the attitude of servile respect of his townsmen who gave way to him on every side. Mr. Kim directly overtook him as he was passing a group of men and observed that their interest in the meeting was of the liveliest kind, and he was again startled as he heard the word "dirty" pronounced by some one among the group, evidently referring to his travel-stained suit. The remark was followed by a general laugh.

Mr. Kim greeted the man in silks in the usual formal manner of acquaintances. Mr. Cho seemed to awake reluctantly from his abstraction and looked at Mr. Kim a moment before returning the salutation; as though trying to recall the identity of the man addressing him. "Ah-a-a," he said at last, "Ah-a-a," and slightly lifted the moon-like glasses he wore, just enough for Mr. Kim to see the gleam of hate in his eyes. Then Mr. Kim recognized the cause of the hostility in the town and the character of the warfare he had so hastily invited, and was astonished at the power of his antagonist. As he went out into the open air of the country, he had abundant opportunity to repent of the folly of inviting the antagonism of this dangerous man.

Beyond the town a short distance was a group of trees sheltering a grave. It offered a place of seclusion and he crept into its shadow feeling greatly humbled and grieved. "Oh Lord," he prayed with his head down among the pine cones, "forgive me for being a fool."

When he walked back into the road, he stood for a long time looking at the cloud of smoke that marked the village. He had been

praying for humility and meekness, but as he gazed he lifted his head and a look of solemn resolve settled on his face, as Madam Kim had seen it when years ago he took down the spear to revenge his neighbor against the mountain tiger.

A short distance ahead of him was a huge pile of stones towering above the road like a haystack. At that point the road made a sharp turn around the pile and dropped suddenly downward out of sight. As he started on he caught the glint of a white garment flung out by the wind. He thought it was a strip of cloth fastened to the stones by devotees of the road- side spirits. As he approached, however, the strip of cloth resolved itself into the form of a woman, half sitting, half kneeling, facing him, with her head hidden by a white covering entirely concealing her face. Respecting her effort for seclusion he passed quickly to the opposite side of the road and was hastening on when a slight cough and. a movement of the head-covering caused him to glance a second time in her direction. She arose and stood by the pile of stones.

"Are you the preacher, Kim?" she asked timidly.

"I talk on occasion in the churches," he said, and made as if to move on.

"I am a Christian and am not afraid to speak to you," she said, pulling the covering closer about her head. "I am the wife of Mr. Cho. the man whom you accompanied here to the town, and, sir, I wish to warn you."

"Warn me?" echoed Mr. Kim.

"He is my husband," she said, hastily glancing past Mr. Kim down the road from which he had come. "While he may beat me many times harder than he has yet done, and may some day carry out his terrible threat to kill me, yet will I remember that he is my husband and that his interest is mine. I will be true to him and to them, and yet, sir, why should I let you suffer or die when a word from me may save you.' She paused again and leaned beyond the pile of stones and gazed anxiously down the road, then added, "I love the new faith, and oh, sir, I never knew what it was to be hated until I became a Christian, and yet, sir, the peace is sweet and, moreover, there is a great force behind me and I must follow my Master however hard is the road. Yes, I will follow without disloyalty to my husband, and with loyalty to Him."

She spoke as one long burdened of a load finding comfort in telling some one that it was heavy.

"I came to tell you that a great danger threatens you. Mr. Cho never makes idle threats. Oh, sir, I beg you to leave speedily and never return. He has some money, some influence with the magistrates, and all

the village people are obedient to him."

Mr. Kim opened his mouth to speak, then closed it and looked hard at the woman before him, then at the cloud of smoke that hovered over the village, and a strange fear crept into his heart.

"Don't you think God has called me here?" he asked.

'There are many places where they will be glad to receive you," she replied. "Violence awaits you here, sir; I do not know how, but it will be in its cruelest form. Mr. Cho has so threatened."

"You see that pile of stones," said Mr. Kim after a few moments pause, and pointing to the mound beside which she stood. "Many centuries ago there stood a huge tree there, and some fear-stricken man or woman, while passing hurled a pebble to its roots to propitiate the wayside demon; the next passer added his contribution and down through the years the pile grew till it towered, as you see it, far above the heads of its foolish worshipers. At last the tree rotted away and each twig and tiny fiber disappeared; still the generations of men piled higher the mound of stones. With each stone here carelessly thrown was a thought, and with each thought a sigh, and with each act when performed an element entered into the fiber of our race, and that village is to-day the sum of all this accumulated superstition and falsehood. Should we then be surprised that they get angry when disturbed in their old inheritance? It would take me many days to carry away this great pile of stones, but I could do it; likewise it would take me a good many days to break down all the elements existing in the hearts of this people represented by the pile of stone, but by the grace of God I could do it."

"But, sir," she urged, "you do not understand ! The time is not ripe for such effort here and we do not want a sacrifice. Look," she continued, extending her left hand, "look at the finger, he cut it off because I attended church against his command." In her earnestness she had let the covering fan back from her head, revealing a face young and full of great beauty and earnestness.

"He says he will kill me if I do not return to our ancestral worship. The annual feast is only three months off, then something terrible will happen. He never threatens in vain, as many of his less powerful neighbors will tell you. Think you, sir, that you will not suffer? And are you not afraid?"

"To come back here, and preach,' he replied very slowly, "I do indeed fear, yes, I fear greatly."

"Then you will not come back!" she said eagerly.

"I will come back, and that soon," he replied very quietly. A tramp of a horse from the direction of the village caused Madam Cho to start

violently and without a word of farewell she snatched up a large gourd and a small root hook and sped out across the hill side. A moment later a horse-man passed and looked enquiringly at Mr. Kim who was quietly seated on a stone reading from a small red Testament, and then he glanced over the field; the Christian woman was laboring with a cloth tied about her head as would any coolie, industriously digging roots for her next meal.

Directly Mr. Kim was striding rapidly in the direction of the county seat, called "Justice,' where, it was said, he would find many followers. This was the object of his many days of hard travel, and he looked forward to his arrival with delight.

## CHAPTER VI AN INTRODUCTION

Word had preceded Mr. Kim of his intended visit and the people gathered to receive him. Half of the Church followers met him some distance from the village, while the other half arranged themselves along the wall inside the church with their leader in the center to await his arrival. The studied purpose to impress him with the dignity and importance of the group surprised him. The leader wore a half foreign suit, which consisted of a straw hat, a pair of trousers, a vest without a coat, a collar unassociated with his shirt, buttoned around his throat and showing as much expanse of throat below as above. Outside the door, mixed up with a multitude of sandals, was a pair of foreign made leather boots that must have been worn by the man with the ill-fitting dark trousers. Mr. Kim asked to be seated by the side of the leader. Immediately the two men were surrounded by all present. The leader introduced himself as Mr. Chang and spoke with an air of importance. His face was long, with high cheek bones: his smooth chin was sharp and when he spoke, he raised his eyes above his listeners' heads and closed his sentences with his eyes on the floor. His face seemed to elongate at the end of each movement of his eyes downward; his forehead wrinkled and his eyes showed a white circle on the upper rim, giving him the expression of having received some injury and was continually on the point of resenting it. He said he was glad to see Mr. Kim, a man who was so greatly trusted by the missionary. While he himself had been able to do a great deal of good, yet he needed help and he was glad that Mr. Kim was there to give him his aid. Of course it was appropriate for him to be modest in speaking of what he had already accomplished, yet the present number of followers would suggest to Mr. Kim that the methods employed were at least appreciated and not to

be lightly set aside for anything that might have been used elsewhere. "Nothing proves the value of a method better than its successes." Mr. Kim would understand, of course, that he would be directed in what he did in that section by the experience of a man who knew whereof he spoke. Following this harangue Mr. Kim was permitted to introduce himself to all present, individually, and he did so in a cordial, cheerful way. It was understood that Mr. Kim was a preacher direct from the hands of the foreign missionaries, and must be versed in all the great truths and law of the New Doctrine; and probably carried with him some influence. Just what that might be they did not know, but there must be something better than they had for was not the world ruled by might? Such had been the case from the beginning of time. Did not the new religion endure while other organizations fell to pieces? Therefore it represented power.

Later Mr. Kim preached a sermon on the subject. "Humility and suffering." He was surprised at the little interest given his discourse and at the frequent glances of his listeners from him to their leader. After the discourse the people did not disperse but gathered around Mr. Kim and their leader in anticipation of some thing unusual.

"Yes," said the leader, "We have a growing group of Christians. A week ago we numbered only twenty-five but last night there were added twenty-five more!

"How was that," asked Mr. Kim.

"O, it was easy," replied Mr. Chang. "You see I have been compelled to use the only proper methods compatible with success and safety. Yesterday I went in and saw the Magistrate and had an understanding with him. For some time there had been a certain man in prison, innocent of any wrong, and we went in as the defenders of the weak and when the Magistrate refused to let the man go at our request, we opened our hymn books, sang a hymn and read the Scriptures and told the Magistrate that his blood would be on his head; that, as we were Christians, we were inclined to be merciful, because that was one of the doctrines of the Church, but if he refused to acquiesce to our demands we would represent his case to the foreigners and they would take off his official head. After some threatening of that sort he let the man go. Now we have a great demand for membership in our church. I expect to see hundreds added in a few days and I am glad that you are here to help me. Of course I would not take undue credit for the results of this great work which has been inaugurated, but the principle that I have laid down will be a safe one for you to follow, and, indeed, it will be necessary for you to do so in order to succeed here in this town."

"Do you mean to say," asked Mr. Kim, "that you have resorted to

political influence to secure followers?"

"Resort !" repeated Mr. Chang. "I do not like the tone of your inferences. Perhaps you do not understand. Perhaps in your part of the country the Magistrates love the people and do them no wrong, but here, if we do not defend ourselves we are set upon and beaten of all we have. As I understand it, Christianity is a helper of the helpless, and a giver of peace. Does not the Word say that he is the Prince of Peace? If we should follow the hint of what your question suggests it would not be peace but suffering unmeasurable. We would all be imprisoned and even the boys on the streets would persecute us and spit upon us. A mighty Church sufficiently able to contend with the oppressors, and magnanimous enough to deal justly with all, is what must be the meaning of the gospel of peace."

"I fear," said Mr. Kim with decision and earnestness, "that you do not know of what spirit you are. The life of Christ was a life of suffering and we, as his followers, must suffer also if we would win righteousness. The kingdom that you and I preach must be a spiritual kingdom and the peace we win is not a peace for the body but a peace for the soul."

'That is all right," said Mr. Chang, "I agree with you in a way. We can have protection for the body; and for the soul, peace, also, if we would; an think of the great number to whom we may bring this peace if we only will work rightly to protect them from the cruelty of the officials. Think, friend, of protected homes, our wives and children unmolested. Let us not forget the great privilege that is offered us if we will only follow our opportunity."

"Politics,' said Mr. Kim, "and the preaching of the Gospel never has, and never can successfully go hand in hand. I perceive that you yourself have before you the great battle of your life to bring your own proud heart to repentance before God, and when you have done so, the peace and security within will be greater than all the things of life besides. If you struggle for the worldly peace you will not obtain the spiritual peace. Christ must be your example. His was a life of suffering and persecution, and if you become real Christians I can promise you little less than that. Yes, the children on the streets will hoot at you and revile you, and your acquaintances may try to drive you from the neighborhood, but you may win them by love to the great faith—thus is the world to be saved."

"Do you mean that you will not join us in our methods of work," said Mr. Chang with a rise in his voice.

Throughout the conversation the company sat in rapt attention, glancing from one face to the other. Momentous things were at stake, they

were for Christianity, if there were to be an advantage in it. If it meant an alliance with a foreigner; an alliance with an organization that could call gun boats. Did the espousal of the new religion mean that there would be no more beatings, no more robbery, no more ruining of homes; did it mean the quiet possessing of their property? They sat with bated breath for Mr. Kim's reply.

Mr. Kim looked from face to face and read the results of his coming answer.

"I," said he, with slow gravity, 'came to preach to you the Gospel of love, which means to love the Magistrate and all who ill use you, it is the only Gospel preached by the missionaries who have been my teachers. This is the Gospel that I have learned and to which I have been called. It is a Gospel that is not propagated by political associations, nor influence. My teachers would frown upon any such methods. What I preach will mean to you everlasting life. It is of faith and not force, and it is a gospel of suffering and enduring. That is my Master's message. You have my answer."

When he ceased speaking, Mr. Chang rose to his feet and walked out of the house. Two others immediately followed. The rest moved uneasily and then one by one arose and walked out, leaving Mr. Kim alone. He looked at the mat on which he was sitting, and his face appeared as if he had received a blow and the corners of his mouth dropped as in physical pain. Outside was a babel of voices raised in angry protest.

Scraps of the harangue reached him. "We will not have anything to do with this man." "If this is what the foreigner preaches we will have a Church of our own." "He is a blind leader of the blind."

The people moved off and left the chapel premises and when the hour for the evening services came no one appeared, but as twilight was falling an old woman came in. She walked straight to Mr. Kim and sat down quietly. "Pastor," said she. Mr. Kim awoke from his thoughts with a start. "No, don't rise," she said. "I want to talk to you. Did you say in your sermon this morning that our sins could be forgiven? And do you think that there is hope for me? for I am old, very old, seventy seven next New Year. And you said pray," she added, not waiting for him to answer. "Now pray for me."

Mr. Kim knelt with the gray haired woman, "O Lord," he prayed, "forgive me a sinful man. I came to save thy sheep and have scattered them. Thou hast said be as harmless as doves and I have been unskilled and harsh and driven them from thee. Forgive me, O my Father!" and a sob rose from his lips.

"Me, me, me," said the old woman, "pray for me." Mr. Kim

paused, then poured out his heart for the woman whose white locks mixed with his own dark ones as they knelt with their heads to the floor. When Mr. Kim ceased the old woman still knelt.

"Seventy years of sin," she murmured, "seventy years of suffering. I have traveled barren waste," her quavering voice continued, "always heat, vast stretches of sand, always thirst. give me drink Lord, I perish."

"Amen," said Mr. Kim, then there was a long silence and the old gray head remained motionless on the floor. The twilight went out; darkness gathered. At last, Mr. Kim touched the dark figure in front of him.

"Peace,' she said, "great peace."

## CHAPTER VII A RELIGIOUS PROBLEM

Mr. Kim arose and passing into the street, bade the old lady a good night; then, turning to her said, "I thank God profoundly for this night."

"I am known in this town as the 'Grand Mother'" she replied introducing herself as is the manner of the East. "I have been called that for seventy seven years. You see, my oldest half brother was a grandfather when I was born, so I have always been a grandmother. I lived at one time in a town called Pagoda, so when the people here want to be more formal or explicit, they call me Grand Mother Pagoda. You note that light twinkling out just at the bend of the road? It is not a small house. That is mine." "Thank you," said Mr. Kim. "It seems to me," she added, "you will need a place in which to worship. I have known all those who were gathered there to-night. I knew their parents before them, and I know the leader well. His heart is bitter and he will not open the church for you to speak of this wonderful life, indeed, he will not. But," she added, "do you think they will find the truth too?"

She walked up close to Mr. Kim and searched his face.

"I trust so,' he replied.

"I have a large room and I would like, above all things else, to have you come with the people there. Ah, yes, and I will tell them, too. She laughed with a note of wonder in her old voice, "I must tell them to-night."

Mr. Kim turned away deeply meditating and walked down the street oblivious of the people he met and of the dogs that yelped at his heels. A new world of ideas had suddenly sprang up within him. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," he repeated over and over again. Then he paused in the middle of the street and was lost in deep meditation, and only moved as he was forced on by a brush load of wood carried on a

cow's back. He had thought to find the Church in the community of people who had gathered as professional worshippers, but instead, he saw it glowing in the heart of this tottering old woman. Nor had it been the work of his hands; it had been born there while he poured out his heart to his Maker in self reproach. "It does not depend upon men," he said, "it will conquer the world," and he threw up his head and laughed with wondering gladness.

His laugh was echoed, but in a different note by some one standing in the front of the inn where he had bent his steps. Mr. Kim recovered himself and turned to see the man whose voice jarred his pleasent train of thought At that moment the owner of the voice stepped into the light that filtered through a paper window, and Mr. Kim recognized the leader of the group.

"I see," said Mr. Chang, "that you are in a pleasent mood and so I thought I would laugh too. It is unseemly for one to laugh aloud to oneself. Yours was a lonely laugh."

"Thank you for your kindly interest," said Mr. Kim heartily. "To make a confession, I fear I have been talking to myself not a little to-night, but to say that I was really alone would not be a fair confession, for it seems to me I never saw my Master quite so clearly as I've seen him to-night."

"Now, that is interesting;" said the leader. "I would like to know the secret of so much knowledge." The words were spoken tentatively as a man will search the depth of a stream before attempting to ford it.

"Would you?' said Mr. Kim with some eagerness in his voice. "Indeed may we not have a quiet talk somewhere?"

Mr. Chang noted the tone of eagerness and warily sparred, it might mean that the strange preacher had some plan of getting hold of his people. "No," he said. "my reception room is full of people and I have no control over any other."

"Then let us go to the church," replied Mr. Kim with quiet gravity. "It is dark and quiet, we shall not be disturbed. I desire to talk with you, for, indeed, I have something of great importance to tell you."

Curiosity compelled consent, and soon they sat down on the floor of the chapel. The moon, creeping over the eastern mountain, filled it with a flood of light.

"I hope," said Mr. Chang, as soon as they were seated, "that your communication will be for the advancement of our common cause."

"I trust so," said Mr. Kim, then there was a pause and both men sat in the moon light in silence for many minutes with the question of the welfare of the city in their hands and the peace of many at their disposal.

"First of all," said Mr. Kim slowly, "I made a mistake today when we met in the chapel for service, and I want to apologize to you." A flash of light shot across the other's face, but Mr. Kim restrained him from speaking by a motion of the hand. "I want to say," he continued, "that I was very hasty, and instead of impressing you with the fact that I loved you, and was ready to do and die for the cause which you have espoused, I fear I gave the impression that I was resentful. I am sorry for it, and have asked God's forgiveness."

"Then you will join us and solicit the foreigner's help, will you not?" the other cried eagerly.

"Our Lord walked through a certain village with his disciples," replied Mr. Kim, 'and because the village people did not receive him, his disciples would have called down fire upon the people. The Master rebuked them; said he, 'you do not know of what spirit you are.' It may be that I have misjudged you altogether. I hope I have done so, but are you sure you have caught the spirit of the Christ in what you propose to do? Do you think he who refused to propagate his doctrine by force, would be pleased to have us resort to political power? If I know what Christianity is, it is to be like him."

"You have entirely missed the spirit of the matter," replied Mr. Chang, "the Gospel says that we must love the brethren, do good to the household of faith, be instant in season and out of season, and with all, does He not want His kingdom to spread throughout the world with the greatest possible rapidity? Do you think that He is desirous for a soul to remain in darkness a moment longer than necessary? We have organized our plans on a broader plane than have you. The measure of our success is the measure of His approval. Would you dare say that our following is not His seal on our methods? Now our efforts to deliver the oppressed from the hands of the magistrate will not only be in obedience to His commands as I have just said, but will bring into the Church a great host that will soon swallow up all else in the country and, as far as Korea is concerned, God's kingdom will have come on earth."

"I admit," said Mr. Kim, "that if you could, in the spirit of love, win the magistrates to our Lord it would be a noble work, but you try to bulldoze them by making them believe it is for their personal advantage or safety to comply with your demands; now that is not the spirit of Christ. He does not want to see His kingdom spread if it is not like Him. Indeed, such a kingdom would not be His. The Christian Church must be a sinless body made up of men whose natures are holy. You will observe there is nothing in inanimate nature that does not show just what is within itself. Again, if you wanted to find a tiger, you would not hunt for it in deer skin;

so that, if you are born into the kingdom of God you will show His nature: not because you try to do so but because it would be impossible for you to show anything else. If you do not show that you must of the same necessity show the nature of the devil. Now the nature of God is love, meekness, humility, self sacrifice, gentleness, without fierceness. To do what you purpose is strife, pride and ambition, these things are of the nature of the devil. It makes no difference how often you gather for worship, sing, pray and read the Scriptures, your worship is evil.'

While Mr. Kim was speaking, Mr. Chang rose to his feet and waited for him to cease.

"All right, you do as you like and I will do the same. By their fruits you shall know them. Observe now what progress you will make; what fruits you will reap in this town. At this point we will come to an understanding. I will have you do no meddling with my people. Beware! You are a wise man and I need not repeat."

When he finished speaking he stepped down out of the door and walked noisily away.

Once more Mr. Kim had failed. When be reached his inn a dozen men were seated on the floor smoking long pipes till the room was filled with gloom and the candle burned down to a tiny glow for the want of pure air. They laughed and told stories with excellent gusto as if that fetid atmosphere was the purest in God's out-of-doors. Mr. Kim was used to it; he crept up to the dim light and read his little red Testament, oblivious of the presence of others, and then bowed his head in a long prayer. The noise and chatter gradually died down as they watched the huge man at his devotions.

"Christians are strange creatures," remarked one, "they pray and sing and are devoted at all times, and they know how to handle a magistrate as no one else can. I think we shall all have to do the doctrine to save our skin."

The Church at Justice remained hostile to Mr. Kim and rejected every effort on his part towards reconciliation. The leader had tasted the wine of power. He had overawed the magistrate and accordingly his imagination expanded with great rapidity. Aladdin's lamp never performed a shadow of the wonderful deeds that would make him renowned during all time. The many tales of prodigies under the guidance of fairies and the generous hand of fate were recounted for the delectation of his comrades. "We," he would say, "shall be called blessed by following generations. We shall gather a multitude here, organized under the rules of the Christian Church, and day by day extend it till we have taken in all similar organizations in the land; and eventually the whole

country will be under our holy banner; then down with all tyrants, and we shall reign in their stead."

"How about the Korean Emperor," some faint-heart asked. "O, His Majesty, of course is all right. The trouble with him is, he is surrounded with so many sharks that he does not know right from wrong. I did not mean that we would remove him from power, but that we would take the place of those vicious scoundrels who surround him. In our coming reign we shall have several advantages over them. In the first place we shall have come up from among the common people, and can appreciate the burden of the poor; then too, we shall have been thoroughly trained in the great ethics of the new doctrine. Confucius left a great system of ethics, but while it has been with us for hundreds of years it has not relieved the oppressed condition of the common people, but now this new religion has a power in it. It is alive, people flock to it, it has made other nations great and the natural corrollary is that it will make us great. Now for instance," continued the talkative leader, "take the best thoughts of the two religions and compare them. Confucianism will blush for shame. We might as well admit it, our old faith is of the dead past, and ranks somewhere with the present order of oppression."

"But," some one interrupted, "what about the comparison?"

"What, friend, are you a Christian and still wed to the old doctrine and must needs really demand an example? Your memory will certainly answer your own questions."

"Ah, certainly," replied the man looking down confused before the severe gaze of his leader.

"Yet," added Mr. Chang in a generous tone, seeing that his questioner was put to confusion, "I will mention one to help your memory, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,' now, there is one which cannot be paralleled by Confucius or his followers."

"Pardon me," said the man before him with eyes still fixed on the floor, "if it will not offend our excellent leader I would humbly suggest ... "

"Go ahead, suggest, suggest," was the reply.

"I would suggest that the ancients did teach us something very much like that."

"Ha-a-a," replied the leader, "not alike, not exactly alike. Now let me tell you the one is positive and the other is negative in their statement, do you see?' and the leader looked hard at the presumptuous man before him.

"A word from me, me," called a thin voice from the back and an old woman arose from her seat and came forward. She spoke in quavering

tones. Her age, unsteady gait and voice inspired respect and the company gave way for her till she was seated on the mat near the leader. She knelt rather than sat and looked straight into the face of the man who was planning the reform of his country.

"I am an old woman," she began, "and I have known every one of you, and your fathers before you were born. I have seen more of the things of the world than you have, though I am a woman. I have heard such debates before with many quotations from the ancient masters. I want to say to you that you are wrong. Exhortations to do the right thing never did any man or woman any good, neither will the new religion any more than the old. It is not information that you need. We all know that it is wrong to do many things, but we do them and will keep on doing them. Now, I will tell you where the trouble is. We need a change of heart, that is what we need, and," she added, shaking her head at the leader, "you must change your heart, Sir, that is more important to you than the changing of the government"

"But I have changed my heart," was the stout reply, "before, I was content to put up with the injustice practiced on my countrymen, but I will have no more of it, is not that change enough for you? 1 have risen with these honest followers' to free my country from oppression; that is a change is it not? "

"But the heart, the heart, man, have you cleansed it?" "You talk like Mr. Kim the preacher,' he replied with impatience, "you are both childish. I tell you I will have nothing to do with a man who is content with a few groups of students. He is as unpatriotic as he is silly. There are great deeds to be done, a nation to be reconstructed, and there is no place for men of such small ideas!'

'Small ideas?" the old lady replied, "His ideas are as broad as the universe. All the world must become the kingdom of our Lord. Is not that idea broad enough?"

"You know nothing," was the reply, "women know nothing of these things: how can they? I start to-morrow to carry our holy Christians plans to other towns. I have figured that by the rate of increase during the last two weeks inside of one year we shall have three hundred thousand followers."

"While I am gone, you, my brothers, will see to it that the weak minded preacher, Kim, does not occupy our church. The silly doctrine that he promulgates would ruin our cause."

"He was crying last night," murmured the old woman. "Who was crying?"

"Mr. Kim was crying."

"What was he blubbering about?"

"He was praying for himself."

"That was right! What! Did he repent, and ask the Lord to help him adopt our methods and help us? "

"He was praying and sobbing because he had driven you all from the truth: because he had not plead with you with greater love, and he was asking for God's forgiveness, and I cried too."

"What did you cry about?"

"I cried because I was a great sinner, I had crucified our Lord and trampled on His love for seventy-seven years, and when I knew it, I could not stand it; and I cried, and then," here she paused and looked at the company and straight into the eyes of Mr. Chang and caught her breath.

"Then what?"

'Then His glory filled my soul"

Her steady gaze held his eyes; and the people swayed on their mats backward with the rhythm of a pendulum. Presently the leader glanced around and the absorbed interest of his associates startled him and he arose suddenly and shook himself.

"I shall visit the magistrate before I leave," he said to the company. "The fellow pretends to be friendly, but I fear that if he should learn not to fear us he would run some of us in prison. What do you think, friends, will the preacher Kim talk to him as he did to us? See to it that the simpleton finds no welcome here." As he stepped out all arose out of respect and several followed him into the street Others gathered around the old woman and regarded her with much interest

"You know I have a large room in my house and I am alone, so I have invited Mr. Kim to come to-night and read the Scriptures to me and pray. He will be welcome and so is any-one who will come," said she.

The company separated, feeling that the quiet of their lives was a thing of the past; that henceforth there was to be trouble. Some shrank from it all, but they had found a leader who was bold and seemed to be wise. He promised great things, why not follow him? If the words of the Grand Mother Pagoda made any impression upon them, the last remarks of their leader had dispelled it. Anything would be preferable to falling into the hands of an enraged magistrate, therefore, they would cling to their leader.

The magistrate was not without resources. Still he stood in great awe of the new organization, which, it was said, would be dangerous to combat. Its devotees had boldly stood before him and insisted upon administering the affairs of his office where matters did not please them. What could he do since the organization was associated with gun boats,

and even His Majesty had never attempted to expel it from the land.

He sent out his spy to watch and learn all he could. This minion sat with the people at every meeting, and was present when Mr. Kim arrived; and was delighted beyond measure to report to the magistrate that the foreign teachers would repudiate any claim to interfere in political matters, and that the new teacher himself, who was the foreigner's representative and trusted agent, had declared that no one could be a follower of the new doctrine if he visited magistrates for political advantage. The magistrate was also delighted to hear the news and sent for Mr. Kim and questioned him in all things relating to the doctrine and Mr. Kim preached him a sermon on repentance which was little different in doctrine from what the leader and his followers of the new faith had recently told him. They had said that he must repent of the squeezes and cruelty he had practiced upon the people; that if he did not repent and restore what he had wrongfully taken they would administer the affairs of the magistrate's office. He had promised to reform, that is, he had said "yes" but that might mean anything; in this instance it meant that he would look into the organisation. Mr. Kim made no reference to squeezing the people, but he said that a man must repent of all the sins he had committed from childhood, "a vast number of sins! how could anyone call them all up and repent of them?' he would let that pass as an exhortation, but he would examine Mr. Kim a little deeper and see what he had to do with the new body and what he himself had to fear from it, so be asked:

"Do the foreigners eat rice as we do?"

Mr. Kim explained all he knew about their food.

"1 am a little surprised," the magistrate continued, "that you come here dressed as any other Korean; don't the foreigners wear black clothing, and is not their style much different from ours?"

Mr. Kim laughed. "Why should I wear foreign clothes?" he asked. "I am a Korean, and since I became a Christian, I am more a Korean than I ever was."

"You mean you love your country more than you did before?"

"Yes," was the reply, "I love my people vastly more than I ever dreamed of before I became a Christian. Before that event I was much like the mass of people living from year to year content if there were enough to eat and a chance to study a few Chinese characters."

"Well," said the magistrate, 'in what way do you love your country? Do you intend to reform it?"

Mr. Kim sat some time without replying. He thought of the class leader and his ambitions, and of the trend of the magistrate's questions, and he feared the results of his answer. "Yes." he said slowly, "I expect

Christianity will reform the country."

"Then why don't you wear the foreigner's clothes?"

Mr. Kim laughed again, 'What do foreign clothes have to do with the reforms of Korea, or what have foreigners to do with the matter?'

"How do you expect to reform the country then?"

"I expect," said Mr. Kim. "that every heart in this country will be so changed by the righteousness of God; that every man will do the right; and that as a result, the fetters of the old past will be stricken from our hands and feet. Righteousness, like the breath of a magician, will change the face of the country in a day. Our mud houses will be swept away, substantial houses will spring up in their places. Railroads will span the country and the thunder of machinery will fill the land. Our students will no longer be satisfied to drone a few Chinese classics to become the laughing stock of the people, but they will sit among the sages of the world. We shall no longer look into the past for our glory, but we shall, during the rounds of an equinox, do for the world as much as we have accomplished for three thousand years, we shall hate the petty and vicious things. Neither rulers nor people will want to exploit either the one or the other, but to sacrifice for the good of all will be the passion of this coming blessed period."

"Very beautiful," said the magistrate, moving uneasily on his mat, "that would be very wonderful,—ah—but you said that the foreigners have no business with the reforms. Do they not try to overawe the magistrate? When for instance he makes a slight mistake in administering justice, and a small sum accidentally slips into the treasury for the use of his magistry or the local government. Those things may happen inadvertently you know. Do the foreigners notice these things?" Mr. Kim did not reply, and he continued, 'Then, too, the law of our land is to punish evil doers by chastising them in public. We overworked men, may, during the course of the years of our service, find the wrong man under our paddle. All men lie, and generally the surest and easiest way to get at the truth is to put the supposed culprit under the paddle. If he confesses to the crime of which he is charged then we can proceed to the punishment that the law provides, but if he confesses to a crime which he has not committed and receive the punishment due such crime, while we deplore his pain, yet it exhibits the dignity of the law and is a deterrant to others who have criminal tendencies, so that, regarding the great mass of people as a whole, our system of administering justice is wise and wholesome. If the foreigners have any quarrel with the matter it should be with the forms of our law, which, of course is open for debate, and should be considered only at the seat of our national government, but it seems to me that having

existed under the wisest of statesmen for many centuries the law should not be interfered with for lightly considered reasons, and much less by foreign barbarians whose national history is like the history of a mushroom."

"What do you mean by foreign interference?" asked Mr. Kim.

"I mean this," replied the magistrate with irritation, "one day when I had a man stretched out for a beating who had been condemned for not paying certain debts, in came this Christian leader called Chang, with twenty others at his heels and ordered me to release the prisoner.

He brought with him a small flag on which was sewed a red cross, he stuck it into the ground and placing a table beneath it, laid his Bible on the table with some other books. Then with bold affront they all opened their hymn books and sang, he then read from his Bible and began preaching to me some thing about the denunciations of a certain prophet he called down upon me the wrath of heaven and earth, and all the demons of the yellow pit and declared that the Christians would report me to the king if I did not instantly let the man go; that the foreigners were back of him and they would have my head. He harangued for an hour and when I told them I would let the man go and look into the matter later, they called on me to repent and to hand over certain monies that I had collected from other evil doers. Now what do you think of that?" Mr. Kim hesitated. "Eh, what think you of that?" he insisted. "Are the foreigners back of that thing?"'

"They knew nothing about the actions of this man," was the reply.

"You mean that this insulting crew is not under the foreigner's direction?" said the magistrate leaning forward, and looking over his fat cheeks into the eyes of Mr. Kim.

"The foreigner would disapprove of it."

"Ah," said the magistrate as he puffed at his pipe with vigor while a wicked gleam shot from his eyes.

Mr. Kim was distressed. He saw trouble ahead for the group of people who called themselves Christians and for himself also, and he strove to interest the magistrate in other things that be might have his personal friendship by which to mitigate the severity of coming events.

The official seemed anxious that the interview should close, and Mr. Kim left with a heavy heart. As he passed out of the small gate he met Mr. Chang, the leader, standing before the large central gate. He had just sent up his card and was waiting to have the gate opened. Both men stared at each other in surprise. Mr. Chang was decked out in a fantastic imitation of a western costume. He wore a pair of striped trousers that were so long they rolled up on top of his sandals. He wore a vest and coat

without a shirt, being warm he had left his vest unbuttoned showing the skin to his waist. A collar was fastened around his neck, but having nothing to cling to at the front it had turned completely around. On his head was a straw hat several sizes too large.

"What," said he to Mr. Kim, "you a Christian and humble yourself by entering a side gate?" It was difficult for Mr. Kim to keep the smile from his face as he answered,

"Our Lord never sought the honor of men. Humble yourself and become as a little child, is his command. The Lord resisteth the proud spirit, is that not what the Word says, Brother?"

"Yes, but the Scripture says that you must be all things to all men. I insist upon being received with honor, because of the character of this magistrate, and chiefly because of his oppression of the people. We, you and I, must free this people from this intolerable oppression: Yes, and see to it that they are ruled with equity. What is the Church for if it is not to spread righteousness throughout the world? and righteousness means that he shall treat us rightly," At that moment the yamen runner appeared at the side gate and motioned Mr. Chang to enter.

"What! insult me by ordering me in at the side gate? Never! Tell your master to open the front gate instantly, or it will be worse for him. Go, I say," he shouted, as the runner hesitated. And Mr. Chang turned a suspicious look at the back of Mr. Kim who had turned and was leaving the place.

Mr. Kim returned to his inn feeling greatly depressed. Two hours later there was a stir in the town. Mr. Chang had returned from the magistrate's, his clothing greatly disarranged and his face purple with wrath. The magistrate had refused to open the front gate for him and Mr. Chang had stormed through the side entrance into the magistrate's presence to resent the insult.

The magistrate had ordered him seized and paddled; the runners did it with a will, till the victim had howled with pain, vowing vengeance with each breath. When he left, the magistrate had threatened forty blows if he heard of his disturbing the peace in the future. Mr. Chang called his flock together and recounted his "persecution" and planned revenge. Discouraged? No! and for an hour he harangued his followers. "Now is the time," he urged, "to strike a blow. I.et us back to that foul fiend's den, beat him to a pulp. The time is ripe, we have only to move and there will be tens of thousands at our heels." But his followers did not respond as expected, they looked askance into each other's faces then filled their pipes. "That is so," they said, and nodded their heads with vigor, "that is so, down with the tyrants," but they glanced each moment with increasing

apprehension at the open door. Before he finished a number near the door slunk off, having recalled duties that had been forgotten till that moment.

Another went to the door and talked with his neighbor in loud voice over some trivial matter; the interruption called the attention of others from the speaker and they slipped out. When Mr. Chang had ceased speaking from exhaustion, his audience consisted of a few of his closest friends and he looked them over in deep disgust and alarm.

"Where have they gone?" he asked. "It is a busy time," some one soothingly said, "and the people have gone to their work."

That night some took fright and left the town, ostensibly to attend distant markets. Others found themselves at Mr. Kim's meeting and they listened with close attention. After the service was over they went to the preacher with their troubles. Mr. Chang had been beaten and threatened; which meant that all the Christians in the section were threatened; would not Mr. Kim help them; would he not go to the great foreigner with whom he must be on intimate terms and secure help? .Mr. Kim replied that as they had done wrong in having to do with the magistrate and had not represented the spirit of Christ they would have to take the punishment and then begin all over again. They left, and some reported him an austere heartless man.

Mr. Chang visited his flock from house to house the next day and was astonished to find none of them in town. The appearance of liveried servants of the magistrate wandering about town filled him with fear. He then sought out Mr. Kim and charged him with being a traitor.

"You are jealous of me," he raved, "and wanted to get the honor of starting this work. You have not only injured my prospects, but also your own. There were scores of people in this town on the point of joining us and hundreds and thousands throughout the country. Now where are they? Not only that, but, before you visited the magistrate not a dog dare wag his tongue against us: now, not only will the magistrate seize us but the people will persecute us here on our own streets and make life intolerable for us and our families. The magistrate will seize us on one pretext or another, and having flayed us, will turn us from our doors into the street. I hope now your envy and malice is satisfied." He seemed on the point of taking revenge on Mr. Kim's person but that stalwart figure argued prudence.

Mr. Kim frankly told him all that had been said at the magistrate's and then added that "it gave him great pain that any one should suffer from anything he had done." "But," he added, "you yourself are to blame for the whole trouble. You were representing yourself as a leader of Christians, which you were not. You did not show the spirit of Christ at all.

If you wished to assume the lead of a political movement you had a perfect right to do so provided you were ready to meet the consequences, but you should not have taken the name of the Christian Church. While I did not know that the magistrate would treat you ill because of the information that I gave, yet if I had withheld my tongue the foreigner would have been compelled to inform the government that the Church had nothing to do with you, and that you had no right to the name of Christian, then not only would they have treated you worse but all your followers would have been arrested and who could have measured the suffering if hundreds were hurled into prison and thousands made homeless. I did not go to the magistrate of my own free will. Hs called me, and I was compelled to answer his questions truthfully; to lie, certainly would not have been representing Him whom I serve. I profoundly regret the turn of affairs, but think you I could have done less? Now, Brother," he continued, "our warfare is spiritual, not carnal. I believe as you do that Christianity will revolutionize the land. Its accomplishment lies distant in the future and will be first of all a revolution of the characters of individuals. It will bring you no earthly power, or glory, not will it bring glory to any humble preacher of the cross."

"Aha!" Mr. Chang broke out impatiently, "you talk like a child. You can't see beyond your puny ambitions of visiting a few groups of people." "Why do I use the name of Christian?" is a silly question, replied Mr. Chang angrily. "You know it has the respect of our people and its name would bring many tens of thousands who would not otherwise join any movement. And then, too, am I not a Christian, and should I not use own name?" As he spoke his face reddened with deepening anger. "And my followers were as much Christians as yours. Do not the Scriptures say 'love the brethren,' and has your action shown love for us who are just struggling into the Church? You have caused us to be beaten by the magistrate. Is that Christian according to your quotation just now? How does it appear in your case? If by men's works you know them, then you, Sir, are evil, and Divine punishment awaits you."

He arose to his feet and walked to the door, then turned about, walked back to Mr. Kim, and, shaking his finger in his face, shouted, "I hope, Sir, they will paddle your hide for you, yes, Sir, I hope to see him do it. Ya-a-a, it will be done, and and I will see it."

## CHAPTER VIII MR. MOON AND HIS JUG

At Standing Stone was a noted school teacher, concerning whom

reference has already been made. He was seventy three years of age and quite unfit for ordinary work. This latter fact aroused much debate in the town. Had he died three years earlier, he would have been spoken of as a man highly honored by the spirits since he was preserved to so glorious an old age, and incidentally, they would have appreciated his good taste in departing before he became an object of charity—but—here he was, and his wife also. They must care for them. There arose a great debate. The immediate relatives of this old couple insisted that it was not convenient to support them and of course the neighbors could not find it in their hearts to deny relatives such rare privilege, so that, at one time during the dispute, the two old people were on the verge of starvation. Finally, the village compromised by trusting its youth to his care.

He had always been a public servant. For three generations he had sharpened the wits of the youth of that town by grinding them through vast tomes of Chinese characters. All day long, year after year, those boys from grandfather to grandson, had droned their lessons before this man and now why should they not know what was good for their old teacher. Five years he had been at rest. It was not good. So once more his home became a house of learning.

These lessons, now, as in the years past, must be bellowed out at the top of the pupils' voices from daylight till dark. A jar of water placed in a comer of the school room played a worthy part in the system of education. The ancient teacher's eyesight was· not good, nor was his hearing, so the lads had opportunity to look after their own affairs, much to their enjoyment; yet the physical disabilities of their master had disadvantages for them. They must at all times shout at the top of their voices to make him hear. The irritability of old age frequently found vent in the use of a long willow cane that lay convenient at his side, and woe to the boy whose voice did not reach him. This vigorous regulation by the use of the willow cane was always accompanied with the astonishing information, hurled at every culprit, that the master's ears were as keen as any man's ears.

Through this discipline and noise the school obtained great renown, being known far and wide as the most successful school in the country. It could be heard the farthest “As far as ten li,” one declared in a spirit of pride, while talking with a friend from another village. Thus it came about that the master surprised and pleased the town in his old age quite as much as be did while laboring for earlier generations, and thankful parents often said they hoped he would live another seventy three years. A sad habit of his, however, resulted in a change which cut short any hope. for so long a period of service. An incident growing out of this habit shook the

community to its foundation.

While the lads enjoyed filling the jar with water, and emptying it too, the master liked something better. Whenever there was a wedding in that section of the country, he would start a boy off with a tall jug. If on returning it should not be full the unfortunate lad would have a fresh introduction to the willow cane. The cane was not pleasant in the hands of this practised patriarch, and few dared hazard its acquaintance, so that during study hours there was a sound of industry. It was a high privilege to be entrusted with the jug at wedding; they were such jolly occasions. Funerals also were a source of joy. The pupil who carried the jug on the latter named occasions might linger any length of time to examine the gaudy bier, or the dress of the hired mourners, and pass his judgment on the quality of the chanting.

Mr. Kim was returning to this town after weeks of absence, thus keeping his word with Martha, the wife of Mr. Cho. He met one of the lads with a jug, who was industriously kicking up the dust in the road and watching it settle over his clothing, hands, and the jug.

"Where are you carrying that jug?"

'To old Moon, the teacher," was the reply, with a moment's glance from the cloud of dust to the face of his questioner.

'Who is old Moon?"

"You don't know our old teacher, Moon? Where do you live, Sir, not to know old Moon?" asked the lad, looking up in astonishment.

"You think him so great? In what way, pray?"

"Why, Sir," here the boy stammered and thought a moment, "why my father says he is, and he knows, so does my brother know and all of us. It is the loudest school in the country. Our boys can be heard studying their lesson ten li any day, and fair weather, at least twenty li."

"So, so," said Mr. Kim," what is the secret of so much noise?"

The lad looked his interrogator over a moment doubtfully, and hesitatingly replied,

"Why, I guess it is his ears."

Mr. Kim soon found himself face to face with the old school teacher who had opened his building for public use at his first visit to town.

"Welcome you are," said the teacher, "welcome at any time. You can't hurt the lads, you can't hurt them. Mr. Cho says you are wicked, but you can't hurt the lads. It is my judgment they can't be worse than they are."

The boys were pleased to listen to anything that would permit them to turn from their books. Mr. Kim talked with great gravity of their

manner of living. Finally he said,

"Now I am convinced that you are all sinners," he paused and the lads looked at one another suspiciously and glanced up uneasily at their teacher who was feeling of his cane and straining his ears to catch all that was said. "I will repeat it," continued Mr. Kim, "you are all sinners, now tell me is that not true?"

The eyes of the pupils sought the face of the eldest lad who was usually their spokesman. The boy thus appealed to glanced around upon his school mates and a slight color tinged his cheeks.

"No, Sir," he replied decidedly, "there is no such person as a sinner amongst us."

"Why, are you sure of that?" said Mr. Kim looking keenly into the lad's face. The boy wriggled on his mat and again his eyes traveled over the faces of his companions.

"See," he replied, "all these boys are young and none of them have rebelled against his Majesty, or the Government, and I believe they have all sacrificed faithfully at the graves of their ancestors."

"Think a moment," said his questioner, "is it possible that we have here a school full of boys and not one of them has ever committed sin?"

"It may be that some of them have not obeyed and honored their parents as fully as they ought. We are country people and have never had the training that the capital people have and perhaps we have missed some of the details," he replied slowly and with true humility.

"Now," said Mr. Kim, "1 do not mean your loyalty to prescribed customs and formal etiquette, but I mean that you dishonor God, and every day you do violence to your conscience." "Violence to their conscience!" exclaimed old Moon with his ear close up to the lips of Mr. .Kim, "Sinners! It is only this willow stick that keeps the little criminals under! Conscience? Why, Sir, they are dead, died with their grandfathers many years ago. I know the generation. The rascals, I have to whale them out of their sins many times a day. Now see here, stranger, if you can doctor up these wild scamps sufficient to relieve the duties of this willow stick you can come here as often as you want." The Master laughed softly to himself, then added, "If you will change their appetite for my wine and my tobacco, I believe I would be ready to do the doctrine myself." The thought amused him so much that he rubbed his thin hands together and chuckled again, all the while gazing over the rims of his huge spectacles at his pupils. "Sinners? My willow rod is the proof."

"Is your teacher right or wrong?" asked Mr. Kim.

The boys dropped their heads in confession that they were fairly judged, and no doubt the worst lot of boys to be found in the country.

Then the eldest lad looked up and said: "Is that what you came to tell us? We know those things, we know that there is a God, and that we are sinful and that we shall somewhere, sometime be punished for our sins, we know all that, Sir."

"I have more, much more that you don't know," said Mr. Kim.

That evening for the second time a great crowd filled the old school house to listen to the strange teaching of this strange man who had been associated so long with the foreigner. "Some of his manners," they said, "were part Korean and some of them were part something else. We will see what funny thing he will say." They had already forgotten Mr. Cho's warning against this "dangerous man."

Mr. Kim learned their names and the next day his cheery voice surprised the town as he went from house to house. He followed the people miles from the village into the fields and talked as they worked. They listened with respect, not being in the habit of expressing their opinions, or, thinking of little besides the question of how to secure their daily bread, they said "yes" to nearly every point he made.

Thus many days passed, and a group of interested people sat each night at Mr. Kim's feet "Good it must be if it proposed to rid the world of sin," they said. A group of men and women handed Mr. Kim their names, agreeing to burn their fetishes, attend the Sabbath service, give up their wine drinking and, in short, do all that Mr. Kim directed. They might know little about the new religion but they knew Mr. Kim. Mr. Moon joined the number, but the question of giving up his wine staggered him.

"It is the only way," he said, "now that I am old and am unable to attend either funerals or weddings, that I am able to enjoy them. They all know old Moon, and are disappointed not to see his jug on such occasions. Then when it comes back I can think over the festive scenes and enjoy it all with my jug just as well and perhaps better than if I were there, for I can calculate just how long the wine will last and can be moderate accordingly. If I should go I would perhaps overdo it a little, which is not good. So you see, there are two difficulties in the way of my joining you, and not the least is the disappointment it would cause the people who expect my jug. You know there are some who do not like this new movement, and it would cause widespread dissatisfaction if the people could not find old Moon's jug at these occasions, and I fear," he said, thoughtfully stroking his beard, "that it might cause persecutions."

One of the members suggested that perhaps the rising generation could get along if they did not see his jug, and as for the funerals the dead would not care anyway, and further so much wine was drunk on such occasions the people would not notice any difference and, indeed, as far as

he had observed, it was always gone at the end, so that help was not really needed, therefore he should not feel badly on that point. Mr. Moon shook his white head and withdrew from the class murmuring something about being public spirited.

Mr. Cho heard of old Moon's decision and sent him a jug of wine with words of approval and suddenly seemed to conceive a liking for the old teacher. Before this event he had hardly deigned to speak to the Master; now, he visited him and invited him to his home and old Moon had not tasted such wine since he was a youth.

"I am glad," said Mr. Cho, "that we have a man of such scholarly acquirements to look after the education and moral training of our lads; it speaks greatly to the good judgment of our townsmen in choosing you for the responsible position; then too, you are a man of such age and experience that you cannot be influenced by every new idea that floats into the town. These are sad times," he added with a sigh, "when disloyalty to ancient creeds and customs is rampant, the followers of cunningly devised fables grow daily. It is like a contagious disease and has no respect to members of the home. It will take a child here, a father there, it will lead a wife from her husband, and when it gets hold of people no amount of force will beat the ideas out of the victim, indeed, sometimes I fear it grows best under hard usages."

The old man shifted uneasily, but did not know how to answer. He had never held an argument over the matter, and just why it was good or why it was bad he did not exactly know; that it demanded a separation from ancient customs he knew, and now that it was stated that such a thing was bad, why, what could one say. He would think about it. When he left his host a boy carried a jug home for him.

On the next visit Mr. Cho enquired concerning Mr. Moon's salary. "The boys bring me about thirty yang a month, and then I have a little patch of ground where my wife raises turnips; sometimes a kind neighbor who has learned that his boy has passed a good examination brings me some tobacco, perhaps a little wine also, and as I encourage the boys as much as possible at the time of the examinations I am not always without these comforts."

"Thirty yang," exclaimed Mr. Cho, in well feigned wrath, "and they expect you to keep alive and also your wife on that sum of money? hateful! inhuman! and they are using your rooms for other purposes also. People gather there for speeches, I am told. I will warrant that the preacher does not add anything to your income."

Mr. Moon had to admit that the religious gatherings there did not add anything to his income, and admitted that so many people coming and

going made sad havoc with his straw mats. "Disgraceful!" said the virtuous Mr. Cho. "Why, you see," he continued, "I have no children to send to school. If I had only known, I might have removed such inhuman treatment. And to think that the preacher should so impose upon a helpless old man."

Mr. Moon was greatly moved by the interest expressed by Mr. Cho. But of course hospitality would demand of him to give over his rooms to the use of his neighbors in any case, and he had never thought of receiving any compensation, and he hoped that Mr. Cho would not think so ill of him as that.

"Certainly," said Mr. Cho, "that represents the greatness of your nature and the fidelity that you have for our ancient customs. That is the more reason why others who partake so lavishly of your hospitality to the extent of making your living hard, should compensate you as a matter of humane sentiment, indeed, if their new passions contain anything humane." Mr. Moon did not clearly see how he had been impoverished by giving over his room for the use of Mr. Kim, but inasmuch as Mr. Cho had seen some such thing, it was not for him to say it was not so, for that would be impolite and then too the great unexpected spirit of generosity that seemed about to shine forth in this hitherto cold hearted man should not be discouraged by him.

"I have thought," continued Mr. Cho, when he had waited and received no reply, "that something might be done to help you. Of course I know that, as a great scholar, you scorn to receive money as payment for your service. Money matters with such men are vulgar considerations. I know that in the elevated sphere of your daily meditations such thoughts do not enter your mind, yet it does not excuse us, of meaner mold, who think on such thing and struggle to obtain them; therefore, I trust that you will not be offended if I duplicate the amount of your salary. Then too I feel so pleased for the noble stand you have taken in regard to keeping up the ancient and honorable custom of drinking wine, I will see that you are supplied with it, beyond the usual gifts from weddings and funerals."

Mr. Moon was overwhelmed with a feeling of gratitude. He could now eat rice instead of millet. He could have a better barrel of pickles for the coming winter, and never be without wine. His cup seemed to be full, it ran over, but as Mr. Cho suggested, he was a scholar and it would be vulgar for such as he to appear either gratified or displeased. He bowed his acknowledgments, and said he hoped Mr. Cho would realize all the rewards of merit that his noble self-disinterestedness demanded.

Mr. Moon found himself still shockingly interested in Mr. Kim, whose teachings ruthlessly demanded attention.

Mr. Cho, however, was insistent that it was bad and would break up the peace of all communities. He had affirmed, in one of their conversations, that the preacher had already divided families of that town, setting father against son, and mother against daughter and children against parents and not only that, but when he had taken the matter to Mr. Kim, the latter gravely admitted that it was indeed the genius of what he was teaching.

It was a terrible outlook for Mr. Moon. The new faith fascinated him. Bad? It must be bad to break up homes and weave such a spell over him, and yet he wanted time to think it out.

Mr. Cho invited Mr. Moon to his home for further conversations. He said it did him good to talk to the learned, or even to be in their presence. Mr. Moon was pleased. Mr. Cho did most of the talking, but what did that matter if Mr. Cho felt that he was edified.

'"I was thinking," said Mr. Cho on one of these occasions, "that the old building in which you are teaching is hardly a fit place for one so old and whose service we are anxious to keep as many years as possible. Of course, I know that your feelings will protest and that you will say the caves of the earth are good places for scholars who live not for earthly things while they contemplate the deeper things of learning, but such is the fact that we who are of common clay should care for every one who serves us, and you are of great service to as. I have a plan and submit it for your approval. I will open one of my large rooms for your work. It is well papered and I have recently called in a man who is clever with his brush and he has drawn appropriate figures of interest, which, I hope, will help the pupils. 'A thing of beauty is an education,' so say the sages, therefore, l have tried in my own poor way to beautify this room for you, and if you want to do so you may bring your boys down tomorrow."

Mr. Moon thought of his school house with its mud walls and broken roof and the problem of repairs already pressing upon him. One side of the building had sagged so much that it appeared always on the point of collapsing. Indeed, some of the people had called their children home during the last rainy season for fear of an accident, so, when the proposition was made, his heart leaped with joy, he forgot his scholarly character and expressed his gratitude like any other delighted mortal. Mr. Cho was please. He saw an end to the meetings. A few words to one of his servants who had learned to keep a secret, and a long pole placed in his hand, a wrench at one of the posts and the old building would be in the dust. He was satisfied, but there need be no haste. The following day, therefore, it was reported that Mr. Cho had placed his name on the building as owner. The notice was in large heavy Chinese characters

forbidding any one to occupy it. Mr. Kim was surprised but not cast down; that night there was a meeting in a home where a family moved out for the occasion.

"We want five hundred yang," announced Mr. Kim, as he unfolded a piece of paper to take down subscriptions.

"Fifty yang," called one, "twenty," called another and Mr. Kim was busy. Soon, however, the sums dropped to one yang each and suddenly stopped as if some one had ordered a halt. Mr. Kim announced a total of two hundred fifty yang, but no amount of urging could secure another cash; the people had given all that they had.

Within the heavy shadows of the opposite side of the room sat the figure of a woman. She had slipped in so quietly that no one had noticed her. The company sat some time in silence and failure was written on their faces when the occupant of the shadows spoke up.

"I have no money," she said, "but I have on my finger a gold ring given me years ago by members of my father's family—here, write not my name but simply a gold ring."

There was a craning of necks to see who had spoken, and Mr. Kim raised the candle over his head and the rays fell on the shrinking figure of Madam Cho. Mr. Kim wrote down one gold ring. The effect was magical. Each woman of the company slipped from her finger the huge silver wedding rings. They were passed up one by one to Mr. Kim who estimated their value and wrote it down. A number of stalwart young men put their heads together, and offered each a number of days of labor. A spirit of hilarity filled the little audience. They promised to labor with their hands till the work was done. Mr. Kim said it was enough.

In a few days they purchased two buildings and used the lumber to build the church. There was a world of bustle and the whole town was stirred by the commotion and many were angry. "Why should people leave the work of the fields to build a place for shouting and noise?" they said, "dogs of the town make noise enough."

"A place of worship among the people built by the people," the Christians said, "how different from Confucianism and Buddhism." Many of the townsmen made sport over their pipes as they recounted how the Christians had outwitted the wiley Mr. Cho. That gentleman heard and was wroth. The Christians were independent of the school building and Mr. Cho had a school on his hands and an old teacher whose appetite for wine seemed unlimited. The students' watchfulness for forthcoming weddings and funerals had slackened to a surprising degree. It also seemed that the Master's grip on the principle of total abstinence for his pupils had relaxed. All these personal wrongs Mr. Cho laid at the door of

Mr. Kim. He would have his revenge, and when next his hand should fall it would be heavy, and it would be as lightning out of a clear sky.

Below the church stood a spirit tree. It had grown old and for some time it had threatened to topple over on a neighboring house. One day Mr. Cho visited the tree and examined it carefully when none could see him. "One blow of an axe would bring it to the ground," he murmured, "but who would have the courage to do it?"

One night the darkness was great and the wind blew furiously making a pandemonium of noises, with swinging windows, banging doors, lifting and tugging at the thatch houses. Those living near the chapel thought they heard the sound of chopping, but who could swear to what they heard on such a wild night. In the morning the devil tree lay stretched on the ground. It had barely missed a house in its fall and the inmates looked it over with a feeling of awe. On examination the stump showed marks of an axe, and immediately the neighborhood was in a furor. "Who could the villian be?" was the angry question on every tongue.

They carried the matter to Mr. Cho, who had long ruled the town and often acted in cases of dispute. That gentleman appeared incredulous but consented to investigate. He set an hour in mid-afternoon for the visit, which gave opportunity for the angered people to gather. He talked volubly with the many who visited him and impatiently waited about his yard for the hour of the visit.

He did not think that it were possible for any one in that town, even its bitterest enemies, to do such a sacrilegious thing as to fell a spirit tree. Of course any such person would know such a deed was a crime that would be paid for dearly. There had been incidents of that sort during his memory when the price had been the life of the culprit; nothing but a look with his own eyes could convince him that there was such a fiend in their fair town.

When he approached the tree on the hour named the crowd gave way for him. He walked with dignity and the people were irritated by the incredulity written on his face. A clamor of voices insisted that the tree had been felled by axe. At first he glanced at the stump indifferently then lifted his moon-like glasses and examined it critically with growing excitement.

"Where is he?" he shouted and stared into the faces of those about him while his face darkened with anger. Those nearest shrank back apprehensively. "Where is the fiend? where! out with him, down with his house! drive him from the town! kill him!"

The crowd pressed about the stump of the tree eager for revenge upon any one Mr. Cho should name guilty of the crime against the village

spirits.

"See there, and there, and there," cried Mr. Cho turning again to the tree and pointing to the marks of the axe. "Some one would bring a curse upon this innocent town. What think you fellow townsmen, what punishment is equal to such crime?"

The little man worked himself up into a rage, staring now at this one, now at that, the while rolling his eyes and sputtering his words with fierce energy. The scene was made more impressive to the villagers as their actor wore the finest of silks and was the most powerful man in that section of the country. A word from him to the magistrate at different times had brought confusion to many who stood listening to him that day. Mr. Cho watched the faces of the crowd with satisfaction.

"What think you?' he exclaimed again, "what shall we do with the villian?"

"Kill him!" some one shouted—the cry caught fire, "kill him! kill him!' they shouted and there was a restless movement like one of their mountain tigers when he lashes himself into action.

"Where is he?" some one shouted "tell us, where?" "Where! where!" shouted Mr. Cho, "who is there that despises our spirits, who is it that turns himself and his neighbors against our old religion and boasts that he will change our ancient customs? Who is it that drives our women and our children from our homes and has brought confusion and strife into our peaceful town?' Here he paused to let his words take effect. "Hark you," he exclaimed at the top of his voice, "if this man remains amongst us the fire demon's revenge will be swift, he will burn the houses from over your heads. Yea, watch to-night or he will burn the pillow from under your head. Revenge not this insult, and flies of a wine shop , will be no more numerous than the devils around your head at night. What shall we do? Some one says 'kill.' Good, kill him! Tear down his house, destroy him utterly, and run his followers from the town; meet them hereafter, never as friends, but as implacable foes."

"Who?' "Who is it?" "Who?" a score of voices shouted, and the crowd moved in a spirit of savage purpose.

"Who? Who? You again ask me that question? Shall I insult your intelligence by telling you? Are you all such fools, so dull, or long suffering that you refuse to know your enemy?" Mr. Cho finished speaking with his livid face turned full upon the new church.

"Ha-a-a-a! the Christians!" shouted many voices at once. "Where are they?" and the crowd started at once for the church.

Mr. Cho was immediately lost in the crowd and quickly found his way back to his home and sought out the old school teacher who was busy

with his boys.

"What is that row about," Mr. Cho asked as the roar of voices reached the school room.

"I hear nothing," said Mr. Moon, "and my ears are as sharp as any one's ears."

"Listen, then. It seems to me there is a commotion in the town."

Mr. Moon stepped to the door and even his dull ears caught the roar of the mob. The old man hastily seized his hat and in spite of protest from Mr. Cho was out of the door with remarkable agility and ran in the direction of the noise, his following school at his heels. When he arrived the infuriated mob was demolishing the church with clubs and stones. The windows and doors had all been broken in, and they were tearing away at the walls with the fury of maniacs. On a rise of ground beyond the church stood Mr. Kim, his arms folded, watching the church go to pieces. Mr. Moon saw his old friend and joined him.

"What are they doing?" asked the old man, panting loudly for breath.

"Revealing what is in them," replied Mr. Kim.

"But why do they do it," persisted the old man, in great excitement.

"They themselves do not know," was the reply. 'Terrible, terrible, and it was a new building," wailed the sympathetic school master. "Ha-a-a! they will not stop here, Sir, they will make your people homeless, they will destroy Christianity from this town," he exclaimed extending one long bony arm at the mob with his excited face turned to Mr. Kim while his white scanty locks streamed out in the breeze.

"Think not so," said Mr. Kim, "they will hurt some of us and perhaps impoverish some among us. But this work of ours is God's work and not man's and He who is for us is greater than he who is against us."

"Ha-a-a!" shouted the school master in uncontrolable excitement, "it is a goodly property and they are pulling down the roof," and he flung himself from the side of Mr. Kim and ran for the crowd with astonishing vigor. Before Mr. Kim could anticipate his purpose he was among the crowd.

"Stop!" he shouted, "it is a goodly house, you fiends, you brutes!" He waved his thin arms in the air, spreading out his clawlike fingers and shouting at the top of his piping voice.

The mob, intent on destroying the church, centered their fury upon it, and he might as well have shouted to the wind. One end of the church had been torn off, and three men had seized rafters for levers and were prying away at a post which supported one corner of the roof.

"Down with it there," a score of voices roared, "at the post there

you, heave! heave!"

The post started and the dust flew from the roof and filled the eyes of all who stood beneath. They staggered back, coughing, sneezing, spitting dirt and dust, and cursing. The men on the roof seeing that the crowd was giving back lost zeal and half paused. At this moment some one caught sight of Mr. Moon waving his arms and heard his shout to stop. His hat had fallen off and his coat swinging open blew out in the wind showed his feeble form.

"You foul nest of vermin, back and out of this, and leave the goodly house alone," he shouted.

Some one set up a cry, "Here he is! Here is a Christian!"

"At him, down with him, kill him," roared the mob, not seeing nor caring who the victim was.

A dozen hands seized the old man and hurled him to the ground and with sticks and clubs from the broken building aimed blow after blow at the prostrate man. When Mr. Moon's head went down Mr. Kim rushed for the mob. He came like a thunder bolt. They had closed up around their victim so close they could not use their clubs and were jostling each other with astonishing fury. The impact of Mr. Kim's huge form swept a path clean up to the inner circle but there the mob stood solid. Placing his hands on the shoulders of two men he sprang over them and came down upon the heads of those who were aiming blows at their victim. He bore them to the ground, and with one motion he lifted the old man from the mass, and held him above his head. Mr. Moon had received a blow on his head, the blood was trickling down his face, and his white hair was streaming in the wind, while his head hung helpless on one side, and his eyes were half closed.

"Look," shouted Mr. Kim, and the noise of the mob subsided at the sight. "Look at your old teacher, see what you have done."

At the word "teacher" there was a pause which started at the center and like a receding wave gradually extended to the circumference. Some stood with clubs half raised, their outer coat off; others were naked to the waist; perspiration streaming down their faces and chests made furrows through the dust that had fallen on them from the roof. The excitement of brute fury still burned in their eyes and faces.

"See!" again shouted Mr. Kim, "see the man who has taught this town all it knows, the man who sat in honorable counsel with your grandfathers who sent them to win honors at the national examination. Look at the man at whose feet every one of you have sat as learners; look at the man in his poverty stricken old age, who now out of love for you, is teaching your sons to become men. Look at his face!" shouted Mr. Kim,

turning him around so that all could see, “see the face of your father! He has blessed you, each one, a thousand times as a mother blesses her babe. You could not let him lie down at last to sleep in peace, but you must batter and bruise him. Look at the lips that have taught you, look at the eyes that have loved you, look at the hair grown white in your service, now matted.—What? look! look! red blood! blood from the hands of his children!”

At this appeal, discomfiture seized many, and stirred the closely compact mob of men. There was an evident desire to hide from view as soon as possible, and disclaim any responsibility for what had occurred.

Mr. Kim bore the insensible man in his arms as he would a child, and the mob parted to let him through. With the fickleness of a mob the world over, they soon stood gazing up at the half ruined building wondering at the cause of their fury. The torn roof looked down at them and the hole in the gable seemed to gape open as the mouth of some human victim. They slunk away, in groups, in pairs, till soon the place was deserted.

Mr. Kim carried his burden back to the school room in the house of Mr. Cho. Without ceremony, he laid the old man down on a mat. Immediately Mr. Cho came in and gazed a moment at the face of the unconscious man, then turned upon Mr. Kim.

“What did you bring it here for? I say, what did you bring a dead man in my house for?”

“Not dead, I hope; dead or alive what other home has he?” replied Mr. Kim.

“Where is his wife?” shouted Mr. Cho. “I won't have it, he must not die here, it would be a curse on me. I won't have it, take it away!”

At this moment, Mr. Moon's eyelids twitched, he murmured something and Mr. Kim bent down to listen.

“A goodly building, a goodly building,” he said. Then he opened his eyes and looked up into the face of Mr. Kim and for a moment seemed at a loss to comprehend his surroundings. He tried to rise. and a groan escaped his lips. He lay back and closed his eyes.

“Ah, I remember now,” he said presently, “did they tear it all down?”

“There is enough still standing for a testimony,” replied Mr. Kim. “Are you much hurt?” At this moment Mr. Cho again looked keenly down into the white face.

“What business had he in the row,” he exclaimed with exasperation.

“I?” replied the injured man feebly. “I tried to save the house. It

was a good house. How much less would you have done?" he added looking up in to Mr. Cho's face. "A man who would feed and care for an old man would have done more; 'twas nothing indeed, I did nothing."

Mr. Cho turned fiercely on Mr. Kim, "I have no place for him I have told you. Move now, quickly. What? die in my house!" continued the fiery little man walking back and forth in the small room.

Mr. Kim looked down at Mr. Cho and his fingers twitched and he wondered again why he wanted to throttle the man, but without replying, he stooped over the school master and picked him up as he would have raised a child and held him tenderly, then he looked down at the angry man before him.

"I have no home here of my own; there is no place but the road side," he said in a searching voice. As there was no reply he added, "You turn the man out, therefore you surrender your claim on his old home."

"Anywhere, any house you want, but out of here," and he walked to the door and held it open, insistence and menace in the act. "Out with him," he exclaimed, "take care of your own victims. There will be more deaths here if you keep on. It is not enough that you should separate the members of house-holds and make them enemies, but you must excite the people with your fanaticism. Why did you come here?" "You, Sir," he shouted, thrusting his face up into Mr. Kim's, "You will have to pay for this day's work. You think you can cut down sacred trees and excite people to violence and go unscathed? Out of here, your presence defiles my house!"

Mr. Kim carried the old man across the town to the old home that he had been occupying for half a century. It was now bare of furniture. There was a hole in the floor opening down into one of the flues and the floors had already grown moist and mildewed for the want of care.

Mr. Kim sent to one of the Christians for an old mat and then with a hoe dug up mud from an adjoining field and filled up the hole. He then built a fire and the smoke crept up through the repaired spot and blinded their eyes, but the fire warmed the mud floors. Mr. Moon was brought in from the grass where Mr. Kim had laid him during these preparations. When this was done Madam Moon appeared as fast as her legs could carry her. She had been out of the village from early morning and had known nothing of the trouble. She flung herself down by the side of the old man in a paroxysm of grief and wailed as a woman will wail for her dead. She rocked herself on the mat, and moaned with the weird call of the East for the lost.

"Hush," said her husband, "it most be that you are glad that I am knocked to pieces, for to say that I am dead before I am is like wishing I

had found the Yellow Valley. You have been a good wife," he added soothingly when she had stopped her wailing, "you have kept me in clean clothes for sixty years and you have made millet eatable every day you had it to cook. Who could say more than that? The old house may hold out for a few more years and you and I will eat and sleep here as soundly as in any other. We are used to it. Vain we were to expect to fare better, and fool was I to think that Mr. Cho had so far forgotten his nature, or that I had grown so great as to make him generous to me. I taught him as a lad and knew him too well. Yet trusted him, fool was I." Then added meditatingly, "That was a good house. A sad waste they made of it." It was a long speech for the wounded man and he lay back exhausted.

Mr. Kim traveled about among his people till he had procured mats, and millet enough to start the old family again in the labor of housekeeping.

Some of the weaker members of the Church came to look at the ruined church and concluded they had business out of town for a time. Others came and picked up the pieces of doors and windows to be repaired. They put the parts in bundles and carried them to their several homes to wait for the final outcome. Many were the questions among them as to who could have cut down the spirit tree, and a feeling of still greater trouble was in the air.

"If," they argued, "enemies had fixed upon that method of persecution then opportunity still stood open for a vast amount of harm." The wounding of their old townsman and friend of the childhood of nearly every man in the town had shamed and restrained them for the present, but had in no way changed the disposition of the people toward Christianity. Indeed their bitterness towards the Christians because of the recent act of violence seemed to have been increased.

Early one morning fire broke out in the roof of a building near where the old devil tree had stood, and it was put out with difficulty. The people of the neighborhood were much disturbed. The next night the house adjoining was visited with fire in the corner of the roof, then the excitement spread through the town.

"We will drive the Christians out. We will pull down all their houses." they said. The third night was no fire, nor was there the fourth night. A stalwart man had taken upon himself to watch for the demon who set the fire. Mr. Kim was confident that he would find him and expose him to the eyes of the public in such a manner that their faith in fire demons would be shaken for all time, but on the fifth night Mr. Kim was called to the bedside of the wounded school teacher. A fever had set in and the old man talked incessantly. He wanted to see the pastor. It was the first time

he had spoken of Mr. Kim as the pastor, but now he called for him insistently.

'Tell me," said the school master when Mr. Kim arrived that night, "do you think the jug is an evil? You see," he continued without waiting for reply, "l have not seen the jug for several days, no, nor have I asked for it. Now tell me am I a Christian?" The words were spoken in a hesitating quavering voice. Mr. Kim took the withered hand in his and stroked it steadily while he fought with a lump in his throat. "Am I?" repeated the man again. "Am I?"

"I fear," said Mr. Kim, "I have been a poor teacher. I thought I was making it all plain, but I see I left the impression that being a Christian was the act of denying one's self."

"Don't cry, don't cry." said the wounded man. "You did tell me all right but I was a fool If it is not giving up the jug and all the other things what is it?" "It is having God within you," said Mr. Kim, "the giving up of sin is the power of God working through you."

"Ha, Ha," chuckled the old man softly, "how can I get him in me? there are lots of things in me but how can I get God there? There is drink devil—and hate devil—and proud devil. But. pastor, how shall I get God there?" and he looked up earnestly into Mr. Kim's face. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved," said Mr. Kim. Then he took out his New Testament and read the old story.

After the reading, Mr. Moon lay a long time with eyes closed. Finally he looked up and said, "I wish I could live just one year longer." Here he paused and was silent, "just one more year," he finally continued, "then I could lay aside the jug, not because I had to do so but because I wanted to do so and could do so."

All night long the fever raged, so Mr. Kim sat by the sick man. Not unfrequently, he stepped quietly to the door and looked anxiously at the roofs of the sleeping town. Mr. Moon had seemed to rest during the middle of the night and then as the morning approached he talked wildly to the youths he had been teaching, calling the names of those whom he had taught fifty years ago, then he was again shouting to the mob to stop. "It is a good house, you young rascals, you young spalpines: leave it alone and back to your lessons there or I will flog the coats from your back."

Madam Moon left the sick man's side when she thought he was entering the yellow valley and went to inform a relative of the family who lived in a neighboring town. Some one else might have been sent but she chose to go. Her absence was not immediately noticed by her husband. She had always held her place in the home as a natural and necessary adjunct, like the furniture or something else connected with his person;

not that he lacked affection for her, why should he not love her? Love is an indefinite term to describe the feeling of Mr. Moon for his wife. While no memory of an early acquaintance and passionate attachment lingered in his mind. for how could that be, when parents choose one's bride, yet the quiet little woman during the half century had become a part of his life. He never cast up accounts to estimate her value. How could he? Why should he estimate the value of his right hand; no one had ever demanded it of him. It was there a blessing and would probably stay there as long as he would need to use it, so why should he be passionately expressive of his regard for it. Because of Madam Moon, he bad eaten his rice and slept in comfort and, when out of employment, had often been fed independent of any effort on his part to get a living. She cared for him in sickness, fanned him when hot, and when cold built the hot blaze for him beneath the floor. Good weather brings good crops; sunshine and rain are necessary and good. they are things for which one should be grateful, so he was grateful for Madam Moon, and when she left him on her errand it fretted him that she was away. He needed things and she ought to furnish them. But the pastor was the one who would understand matters relating to him. Mr. Kim was a man and would of course under stand him. So it was that he would call to his old wife to bring him a fan and keep him cool and become peevish when she did not appear, but he would look fondly up into Mr. Kim's eyes and mumble words of gratitude for his attention.

When Madam Moon returned the sun was just trying to send out his long sheen of twilight as a messenger that he was bringing the glad day with hope and strength in his wake. Madam Moon crept in at the door, her old limbs shaking from weariness. She crawled on hands and knees across her husband's mat, as would a faithful dog to its master, and in her face was a dumb look of suffering. She loved her husband as all women love that which they tend and nurse.

“Ah,” said the wounded man looking up into her face as she approached—”that's right, now drag me over to the door, I want to look out to where the lads are playing. The rogues, they should be in at their lessons,” and he lifted his voice to call them in. “Ho! not here?” he shouted. Then he came to himself as Mr. Kim picked him up and bore him to the door. “Thank you pastor, thank you,” he said gratefully. A prolonged wailing from his wife held his attention.

“What is that now,” he asked, “what are you crying for?” and his eyes sought hers as she knelt with her hands on the mat and leaned her face over his.

“Is it as bad as that?” and he looked steadily into her face. Her

tears fell upon his face and she hastily brushed them away with the corner of her soiled jacket, but she did not answer. "You were a good wife," he said, "that is true, you were a good wife, a half century of goodness to me that is a long time, but," he added slowly, "it is only as yesterday."

The sun rose and poured his glory in at the open door upon the sick man.

"Ah, their footsteps are all around me," he said, "the young rascals ought to be here at their studies," then there was a pause—"Pastor," he continued, with a low quaver, "you say it is easy like that, you forget, I am old, seventy three you see, and I have carried the jug these many years and many a wild thing I did during the long past. They are all before me as if it were but yesterday. Are you sure, it is so easy? Only believe, did you say? Here is my wife, she will tell you that in these many years I have piled up a great mountain of evil, which stares downward to crush me. What did you say? will he carry the burden? I have tried to teach three generations, but at whose feet have I sat? eh? Why did you not tell me before. Who kept this from me so long?"

His mind wandered again, "Hark," he whispered, "they are calling me, many of them, they are coming for old Moon, the lads of my school room," and he whispered the names of a generation long since forgotten.

Mr. Kim straightened out his limbs and the old white face turned on its side toward the door and Madam Moon wailed for her loved dead.

At that moment a company of men from the village appeared with clubs and stones. They surrounded the house with loud execrations, their hats were off and their coats had been laid aside. Some of them wore nothing but their trousers tied around their waist.

"Here he is, here he is," they shouted as they caught sight of Mr. Kim through the open door, and instantly the mob rushed to the end of the building. They held their sticks above their heads and their fell purpose burned in their eyes. Then they saw the body of their old teacher stretched out before them and they paused. Mr. Kim was kneeling at its feet while Madam Moon rocked herself and wailed, not loud as people usually wail, but in quavering sobs, with grief too deep to be expressed by the voice. She ran her fingers through his hair and touched his forehead and cheeks with the tips of her fingers, then laid her cheek against that of the dead. She called him by all the endearing terms she knew and the crowd of wild men stood and stared at her—and the dead.

"Old Moon is dead," they whispered, and forgot the sticks in their hands.

Mr. Kim picked up the thin body and carried it close to the door. He laid it out on a mat before them and the angry townsmen scattered and

sought their homes. There were those among them who greatly feared what might be the result of a complaint to the magistrate.

"Old Moon is dead," they said, "killed by a mob," and the town was afraid. When a search was made in was discovered that Mr. Moon had but one family of relatives, and they were poor. Who then would bury the dead?

"You are not Christians," said Mr. Kim, "neither is Madam Moon, nor did Mr. Moon attend church during his life, but if you so desire we will gladly see to it all and bury him as the Christians bury." "But," they said, "if you bury according to Christian rites then you will be unable to get anyone to carry the dead, and who is there except the professional that will dare to touch the bier of the dead and be defiled thereby?" "I will attend to it," said Mr. Kim.

A few hours later, a body of Christians gathered at the house, and with their own hands placed the remains of the old school master in a coffin and without noise carried him to the half wrecked church, and there a great crowd of curious people gathered outside of the building and looked on in perfect quiet. Mr. Kim preached of the forgiveness of sins to the living and of eternal happiness for the dead. At the close the little body of Christians gathered around Mr. Kim and urged him to leave the town for a period.

"Last night," they said, "fire broke out in the thatched roof of a half dozen houses in different parts of the town, and the people are not going to stand it. They say the devils are angry for the insult to their tree and will destroy the town, unless the townsmen speedily destroy the one or ones who committed the desecration. You had better go," they urged, "to-morrow it may be too late. They have also threatened us and our houses, but what would we do if you were destroyed?"

"What do you suppose is the cause of these fires?" he asked. None could give a satisfactory answer and some were sure it was really the work of a demon to get rid of the Christians in the town. "I will stay," said Mr. Kim.

The Christians picked up the coffin and started with it out across the field. A shout arose from the crowd they were leaving, and three men came running towards them with a larger crowd at their heels. "Stop!" they shouted, "you Christian dogs, stop!"

The bearers paused, and set the coffin down. "Where are you going?" they demanded.

"Out yonder," the bearers said, pointing to an open place on one of the hills where a grave had been prepared.

"What," one shouted, "out there? What necromancer has ever

found any thing commendable in that site? We see your wickedness. This man was not a Christian and you want to work evil for his departed spirit out of spite and thereby bring his wrath down upon us." He turned to his companions, his face red with wrath. 'What, Sirs, see you the insult? no flags, no chanting, no mourners, no drinking. They have defiled our ancient customs and defied the spirits. Treating the oldest man in this country as they would treat a dog, burying him as one would bury a beggar. The man who has been the teacher of this town for three generations. Out with you." He threateningly approached the nearest pall bearer. "Get the wine and the necromancer, and secure a lucky place on the mountain for the burial."

Mr. Kim stepped quietly in front of the coffin, and motioning with his hand said, "You have stated the matter correctly. This man did not attend the church, and unless it was with the drawing of his last breath he never learned anything of our faith. You are right in claiming the body. We are doing it because there was no one else willing to do it, therefore, we cheerfully turn the work over to this gentleman who has called us to a halt." The bearers stepped aside with Mr. Kim, and left the coffin with the crowd. But they were not looking for a chance to bury the dead. Some of them would not come near it, nor touch the bier under any consideration.

"We?" the leader shouted, "not we. You do it, but do it according to our custom. Honor the rites of the sages." The Christians withdrew and moved as if to return to the village. Seeing that the coffin was being left in their charge the crowd were panic stricken and fled; the most boisterous ones among them were in the van. The company of Christians watched the crowd disappear into the town and then quietly returned and took up their burden and soon lowered the remains of the old teacher Moon in the grave.

"I do not doubt that you are right in your surmise," said Mr. Kim, addressing his people, "but I think that you would find the demon is in the heart of a certain man who lives here. You need not diminish your belief in the fact of a personal devil now that you have become Christians, but you had better limit the sphere of his activity to the hearts of men. The devil may start the fires but the match is carried in the hand of some man."

Then Mr. Kim told how, by watching the streets for two nights, certain demons had not dared to commit those particular kinds of crime. He proposed that the town be divided into sections and a member of their company be assigned to each section to seize any one whom they found setting fires. The proposition was agreed upon, and all night the town was watched, but there were no alarms. They slept the next day, and the following night they watched again but without better results, and some of the watchers gave up the task as fruitless and impracticable, "For," they

said, “who would suffer himself to be caught?” No, they would go to bed that night. It thus resulted that Mr. Kim moved silently about in the shadows of the buildings all night alone. He had finally taken his stand opposite the yard gate of Mr. Cho, and stood shielded by a growth of gourd vines that ran over a neighboring wall and rambled up over the roof of a house against which he leaned. A pestiferous dog came out of the opposite compound and set up a howl, and was joined by a pack throughout the town. This particular dog would approach Mr. Kim's hiding place, sniffing out at him and then dart off with a wild cry. This he repeated a number of times till the whole town echoed from end to end. At each approach the dog grew bolder, till at last he placed his nose quite up to Mr. Kim's hand, when with the other hand he seized the animal by the throat, shut off his voice with one mighty grip, and lifting the dog from the ground swung him into the air. The animal shot upward over the low roof of the adjoining house and down into the yard. There was a dull thud, followed by a whimpering, then all was silent. A number of householders opened their doors and looked out, but soon all was quiet. Mr. Kim stood there till he ached with the cramped position and was on the point of giving up the watch for the night, when he heard a movement at the door opposite him. There was a soft scuffling of feet, the door opened softly, and Mr. Kim peering out through the gourd vines saw a dark figure step out into the street. Mr. Kim waited till the shadow had turned into a side street and with the silence and swiftness of his mountain tiger followed. As he peered around the comer and looked down the street, the figure was still pursuing its way in stealthy silence. Again, it turned up a second street, and immediately Mr. Kim was at the corner, and when he peered cautiously around, he saw a man of nearly his own height looking steadily at the roofs above his head. Finally the man bent over and hutched his coat up over his head: there was a moment's pause and a light flashed out from beneath his coat, then all was dark again. Mr. Kim stooped so the view of the man was brought between him and the sky. He saw the strange figure straighten up and his hand went up into the thatch of one of the low houses, and when he withdrew it a tiny light stood there like an eye of some evil thing. In an instant, Mr. Kim was upon the man and had hurled him to the ground. The surprise was complete, but after the first shock, the fallen man struggled fiercely to rise, but Mr. Kim pinioned his hands back of him and held him. The scuffle had not been without noise, and the dogs again set up pandemonium which brought the people to their doors.

“Will some one come out?” Mr. Kim asked of the house opposite. Immediately a half dozen men stood around him and his prisoner.

“Look up at that roof there and see what you can find,”

commanded Mr. Kim. Some one did so, and pulled out a piece of fuse made of hemp and used by hunters for their match-locks. The people greeted the sight with a storm of wrath. Mr. Kim explained how he caught the man in the act. Several would have immediately wreaked their wrath on him, but Mr. Kim forced them aside.

"Who is he?" a dozen voices asked at once and insistently.

"Bring a light," Mr. Kim demanded, and several started for that purpose.

"Who are you?" demanded Mr. Kim close down to the man's ear. "Tell me quick, before the lights come. Your case is urgent. Are you a resident of the town?"

"No," was the muffled reply.

"Who then?"

"A stranger from a distance."

"Who set you at this work?" No answer.

"Did Mr. Cho set you at this?"

"Yes."

"Did any one know you here?"

"No," was the sullen reply.

When lights came the man was dragged to his feet and his clothes examined. A bundle of fuse was found on his person, at the sight of which there was an uproar of voices. Mr. Kim still held him and explained how he had watched to catch the man. Did any one know him, had anyone ever seen him before? There was no one who seemed to know anything about him. "Now see here," said Mr. Kim, turning to his trembling prisoner, "Answer me one question, did you set the other fires? You know what it means if the magistrate asks you that question, and it will be easier to answer it now than then; there is more mercy here. Did you do it?"

"I did," was the reply.

"Did you do it to persecute the Christians?" "I did," stammered the frightened man.

"Now fellow townsmen," said Mr. Kim, turning to the crowd, "You have it from the man's lips whom we have caught in the act. Now, it is fair for the sake of justice to other citizens, that you admit they had nothing to do with this matter; that the devil who is firing the town is this man. Is that not so?"

"Why, we can't blame the Christians," some one replied, "that is right," repeated others.

"What shall we do with him?" asked Mr. Kim.

"Kill him," they shouted, "condemn him by the decree of the town and execute him by the law of five, the club, spear, and gun is the law of

the land, by it let him die," shouted many, and there was a restless movement toward the prisoner. Mr. Kim beckoned with his hand for attention. "Wait," he said pointing toward the east, "the light is just breaking over yonder mountain. Wait till the town shall assemble. Unless the whole town takes part in the condemnation, a few will have to bear the responsibility. Do you want to bear it alone? It may be a heavy burden. He who bears the weight of a man walks not easily. What say you, shall we wait an hour till the sun is up and the people gather?"

"Wait," some one shouted, and it was taken up and passed from lip to lip, "Wait."

Mr. Kim breathed a sigh of relief for the respite. The man was shaking in every limb and was trying to make his voice heard. Mr. Kim heard the words Cho, and ordered him not to speak that name.

"What say you," called Mr. Kim again, "Who in this town has influence with the magistrate?" The people waited. "Mr. Cho?" he suggested "Cho," they called, "that is right, Mr. Cho," they repeated. "Good," said Mr. Kim, "we will take him there to be judged. He has a great compound where many can gather," and the people opened a lane to let him through with the prisoner.

When they reached the Cho compound the sun was just rising over the distant mountain. The large front gate was ajar and some running in advance pushed the gate open and Mr. Kim followed with the prisoner. The noise of many feet and voices brought that gentleman out into the yard and when he saw Mr. Kim leading the prisoner his jaw dropped and his face grew ashen while his legs shook so that he could scarcely stand. Immediately a dozen voices were trying to tell him what had occurred, but he had no ears for what they were saying but looked with bulging eyes at Mr. Kim and then at the trembling prisoner. Many were the shouts to kill, and the trembling Cho listened and looked and his face was drawn with terror. Mr. Kim dragged the prisoner to where Mr. Cho stood and the prisoner seized that gentleman by the feet and placing his head to the ground begged for his life.

"Save me, save me—you sent me: you're to blame!" he wailed. Fortunately for Mr. Cho the scuffling of feet and the eager voices drowned the prisoner' s words, but the terror of that gentleman was pitiable beyond description. He seized Mr. Kim's sleeve for support, while Mr. Kim reached down and raised the prisoner to his feet and shook him fiercely till the man's teeth rattled.

"Say that again and you are a dead man; be quiet and you may live," he said.

On the opposite side of the yard, the wall ran close to the end of

the house, leaving a small passage between. To this point Mr. Kim dragged his prisoner and whispered to Mr. Cho to come too.

"As you value your life keep with me," he said. "Straighten your face and look natural, or as sure as the sun is rising yonder you are a dead man. Your own hands have set this flame; beware it doesn't consume you. Follow me."

As soon as they reached the end of the building in front of the alley just described, Mr. Kim stood his prisoner up and bade every one look at his face and see if any one recognized him. 'Speak," he called, and a quietness settled over the crowd. "Have the townspeople gathered?" he asked.

Around the gate, the people had massed a great number, and inside they stood so close that it was impossible for any one to move except with the extremest difficulty. "We are here," they shouted.

Mr. Kim related in a voice that all could hear how he had been about the streets believing that the fires occurred by the hand of some incendiary and not by angry spirits, and how, seeing a man pass down the streets, he had taken after him and saw him fasten the fuse into a thatched roof and had seized him. The man who had pulled the fuse out of the roof held it up as proof, and also the roll of fuse they had taken from the prisoner's person. A murmur ran through the crowd. Mr. Kim bent his head close to Mr. Cho.

"I shall hand the man over to you in a moment and if you don't let him slip down through this alley at the back then you must pay the penalty of your deeds."

Mr. Cho tried to speak, but no words came through his blue lips. "If they determine to send this man to the magistrate and try him according to the law, to the magistrate he will go, and I doubt not you will have ingenuity enough to save your neck, but if they determine to kill him, the alley man, remember the alley."

He had hardly ceased speaking to Mr. Cho, whom he had forced close up to the ears of the prisoner so that both could hear, when the men with the fuse had finished their exhibition. "I think," Mr. Kim continued turning to the crowd who had stood quietly up to that moment, "that the magistrate will take the prisoner in hand and deal with him according to his deserts." A murmur of dissent went through the crowd. "I am proud of this town," said Mr. Kim, "it has had a long honorable history for justice and fairness; now let us not sully our record, but show to the world that we respect the law, which is one of the highest marks of civilization." "That is right," some one shouted, "take him to the magistrate,' and Mr. Kim observed that it was a member of his congregation who had spoken.

Again a murmur of dissent ran through the crowd.

"The law of the five, citizens," some one shouted.

A hundred voices took up the cry and it roared out into the street and was repeated by a mass who stretched in both directions as far as could be seen. The club, the spear, and the gun, they called.

"Give him to us: out with him back of the town!" and the uproar became deafening. Mr. Kim waved with his hand but could not be heard. There was a motion of the mass of men toward him and Mr. Kim pushed Mr. Cho forward by the side of the wretched criminal and deliberately directed Mr. Cho to take hold of the man so that all in front could see what he was doing, then he turned, and again tried to call the attention of the crowd by waving both hands, but they were beyond all possibility of control.

Suddenly, there was a yell by those in front, and he turned around to see the prisoner fleeing up the passage way and Mr. Cho standing and looking stupidly at the fleeing man. Mr. Kim turned to follow and stumbling fell as the shock of the crowd struck him; thus for an instant he blocked the passage with his huge form. Two others fell head first over him, and when he arose the fugitive had made the end of the passage and was vaulting over the wall.

Nimble feet followed, but the man was fleet of foot and running for his life. The people scattered throughout the town and over the adjoining country, but he escaped. While this was in progress Mr. Cho sat down on the floor of his room and trembled in abject fear. Mr. Kim went to him and quietly told Mr. Cho how that the man had informed him of Mr. Cho's guilt in the matter and explained how he had compelled the man to keep quiet.

"Now," he added, "I have saved your reputation and I think your life. Have I not been your friend? I speak not for myself but for the helpless little body of Christians whose first doctrine is to love, for if they do not love their neighbors and do good to them we count them not among us. I appeal to you in their behalf to treat them fairly. I do not ask you to assist us but I do appeal to your manhood that you no longer incite the people to persecute them."

The whole conversation was conducted by Mr. Kim, for Mr. Cho refused to offer any remark or respond to anything that Mr. Kim said, and Mr. Kim knew that when safety had restored his courage he would renew his efforts to do the Christians harm.

The Christians went immediately to work to repair the broken church walls. Neighbors gathered around and looked on, then in an impulse of neiborly feeling joined heartily in the work and helped replace

the roof. It took the mob but half an hour to tear the building to pieces, but it took two weeks to repair it. At the end of that time the Christian following had been increased by half, greatly to the dismay of their enemies and the wrath of Mr. Cho.

As soon as that gentleman had found that the fugitive was beyond capture, his spirits arose and he swaggered about town as ever. Indeed he had been peculiarly honored in having the prisoner brought to his place. It elevated him in the opinion of all. In regard to the escape of the prisoner, in the opinion of the people with whom Mr. Cho talked, Mr. Kim was to blame, for why should he release his hold and place him in the hands of a weaker man; indeed why had not Mr. Kim asked to have him bound? Such carelessness was culpable, said Mr. Cho, and some wondered if they should not make complaint to the magistrate in regard to it. Mr. Cho felt sure the preacher intended to let the man go, as he did not like it because the people would not take the prisoner to the magistrate to be judged.

## CHAPTER IX. MARTHA AND HER TROUBLES.

During all this time Mr. Kim had seen little of Martha, the wife of Mr. Cho. Stories of her husband's cruelty came to him frequently, but no report direct from her lips. A number of women had joined the Church but they were shut out from the home of the wily Mr. Cho. On the day following the capture of the incendiary Mr. Kim met her unexpectedly on the outskirts of the town. She would have passed with her face averted as the law of modesty for women demand. but he spoke to her. "We have greatly missed you," he said.

'Think not my heart is cold, or that it does not sing the glad songs that you all sing," she replied with averted face. "My road is one of thorns, still were my wounds the only reason, I might without bitterness welcome the pain, then would the Church door swing inward for me also. But I have other reasons, problems too profound for me to solve. Once life for me was simple; no more free are the birds than was I of responsibility. I am now vastly perplexed and the more I ponder the darker is my way." She paused a moment, then turned her face full upon him and continued, with the simplicity of a child:

"I want to obey the Christ, but at the same time I love my husband, the baby, and all that is ours. Women from the beginning of time have lived in subjection to their husbands and I have read it out of God's Word. I think it is the only passage my husband has read," she added with a faint smile. "If I meet in your gatherings I must come boldly. To do so will

bring me immeasurable suffering. Not many days since Mr. Cho came upon me while I was reading the Word. He was angry, so angry he lost his voice. He spoke with a face cold and hard, with white lips that did not move. I know not that I really heard, but from his dark soul he told me he would kill me. This is proof he keeps his word," she said, holding up the hand that lacked one finger. She paused a long time and looked down at her feet, but as Mr. Kim did not reply continued. "Whom shall I obey?"

Mr. Kim had never met a question so difficult to answer. The two stood in absorbed thought and Mr. Kim withdrew his eyes from the bowed head and sought inspiration by gazing about him. He knew that if he should state his opinion, she would be at the service on the next Sabbath, and the results might be too terrible to contemplate. He held in his hands her life and more,—did he not also hold in his hands her eternal life? The more he thought of it, the more confused he became and the perspiration stood out on his forehead. She looked up in his face and saw his perplexity and her own concern deepened. He turned his shoulder towards her and his breath came sharp as though he had been running. A passage of Scripture was struggling to his lips, and at last he said:

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

When he looked at her again her head covering had slipped back upon her shoulders, her large brown eyes had widened with a sense of coming peril, her lips parted while the flush died out of her cheeks and left her face like marble, and she drew in her breath with a half-articulate sob.

In his mountain home, Mr. Kim had found a fawn entangled in a thicket and in the fierce spirit of the hunter he struck her down. Her wild sobbing cry and appealing brown eyes followed him for many a day. He now turned his eyes from Martha's face with a sickening sensation of having struck her. He remembered the fawn and his own red hands of that day, and he again looked down at them and shuddered.

"Madam," he exclaimed, "God will care for you. Would that I could bear your pain."

She dropped her head and pulled the covering over her face and walked slowly homeward. Mr. Kim knelt by the side of the long ferns by the wayside, nor did he arise till a passing stranger touched him and enquired what was the matter.

The next Sabbath the services had already continued some moments, when Martha arrived. She took her place well to the front, and when she knelt she gave vent to a slight sob. She remained kneeling so long that some one felt it her duty to touch her. Martha arose to a sitting posture and faced the preacher, surrendered to the message of the hour. At

the close of the service, she lingered by the door that Mr. Kim might speak to her. When he came up, she looked squarely in his eyes, and down in his heart there was a feeling of awe. He had seen Mr. Cho on the streets that morning, and confessed that he had never seen a face so livid with a look of hate, and he knew that in a few moments a tragedy would be enacted in that home. How fragile the woman looked, and as he thought of the suffering awaiting her, tears filled his eyes and stood out on his cheek. She smiled back at him, and then there was a catch at her throat and she steadied herself against the door post. Her lips parted and formed the word "pray" but no sound escaped her. He watched her with her baby closely bound to her back as she took the large road leading through the town. In her hand she carried a hymn book and a little Bible. Her steps were directed towards the front door of her home. Some one explained that she had climbed over the back wall to escape her husband's notice when she came to church, but it seemed now that she did not want to conceal her movements. When she reached home, her face was as white as the silk jacket she wore. She climbed up the high steps and looked at her husband sitting on a mat alone on the opposite side of the room. She carried her Bible without effort of concealment. He saw it and knew that the crisis of their lives which he had invited was upon them. When she reached the top step her legs would scarcely support her and she looked at him as a fawn looks at the hand of its slayer. For full a moment the two looked into each other's eyes, and the blood darkened the face of Mr. Cho. She slowly turned her back to the door and the child climbed down upon the floor and ran in awed silence to the opposite side of the room, then immediately forgetting the fear that intuition had inspired, commenced playing with a sandal, calling it a boat, and dragged it over the polished floor with a laugh of glee. Martha climbed slowly into the room and placed her books on a shelf which ran across the side of the room above her head.

Mr. Cho arose to his feet with a spring. He did not draw them under him, but leaning forward, his feet slipped from his lap and on the instant he stood erect. His eyes shot fire and he trembled with rage; a deep guttural sound echoed in his throat; with a snarl he flung the books on the floor. He was upon his wife with a wolfish scream, and with one motion seizing her by the hair be fairly lifted her from her feet and she crumbled as a garment, unresistingly in the far corner of the room. "Kill you!" he screamed, "I will kill you!" He seized her by the hair and dragged her across the room.

"Curse her! curse her!" he raged, and stamped her under his feet. She flung up her soft dimpled arms and shielded her face from his. At the

other end of the room sat the baby with the end of a heavy ironing stick in her mouth looking with open eyed silence at the scene. The father glanced around the room for a missile to carry out his threat, saw the club, seized it from the child's band and hurled it at his wife. It broke its force on the cross beam overhead and fell with little less force upon the head of the prostrate woman. A shudder ran through her and she lay still. Frothing at the mouth, he again seized her by the hair and dragging her across the room, flung her in the opposite corner, but she did not move. Then Mr. Cho paused and looked at her and the fire softened in his eyes. He looked at his hands; they were red and warm: then he shuddered and looked furtively at the door. Already a curious crowd had gathered outside and was pressing into the compound. He swung the door shut, and again turned to his wife.. He saw a red streak coursing out from her dark hair and the fear of the coward crept into his heart. "Curse the Christians!" he said in a hoarse whisper of bitter bate. "Curse him, the preacher!" Then with a feeling of panic he ran out to the kitchen and washed his red hands, then back be went to the prostrate woman. How easy it was to kill. He had not known it was so easy. He took her by the hand, "Wake up," he called, "wake up will you," and his voice shook. Some one rattled at the door and at a bound be seized and locked it. He again went to the kitchen then stood still and his teeth chattered with fear; he brought in a basin of water and tried to wipe up marks of blood from the floor. He picked up a delicate hand that persisted in clinging to her hair and washed the blood from it; when he laid the hand down it remained where be put it and fear increased in his heart. The spot on the floor again turned red and Mr. Cho looked around the room quaking with terror. A small window at the back protected with slats and covered with paper led out into the back yard. If opened it might permit a person to pass out. He tiptoed to it and pulling off the paper tugged at the slats. One gave away, filling the room with dust from the mud wall. He put his face to the opening. To his dismay he looked into the eyes of Mr. Kim. He slunk into a corner for a moment and grovelled on the floor, then gradually all his hate and fury returned. he had become a murderer and the cause of all his hate and crime stood at the opening of that window; the ironing club was at hand; he seized it, dropped it, seized it again and when Mr. Kim called softly if all was well he aimed the club at the opening. The aim was true. There was a dull thud followed by the sound of a falling body. What was to be done must be done quickly. He would tear from the wall the slats and climbing over the fallen man flee from the responsibility of his crimes. He applied his weight to another slat, but it would not give, and he wrung at it, and worried it, as a caged animal will its prison bars, then he stepped back and

looked at the opening in rage and renewed fear.

The baby crept over to her mother and pulled at her skirts. "Hungry," she said, using the only word in her baby vocabulary. She patted her mothers cheek and called to her fretfully. The basin of water was a new plaything and she applied it to her own face, then crushed the wet rag against her mother's cheek, then applied her lips to her mother's breast. There was a quiver of the eyelids and the color returned to her face and she stirred. Mr. Cho ceased pulling at the slats and a look of relief swept over his face. Presently Martha rose to a sitting posture and looked about the room dazed till her eyes rested on her husband. He sat down, some distance from her, his face black with sweat and dirt from the wall. Her memory returned and she looked appealingly at her husband. He had not killed her and as he looked her over the devil of hate again crept into his eyes and looked out at her. "I told you I would kill you," be hissed. "Will you give it up now or will you die?" She sat some moments steadying herself waiting for her strength to return.

"I have told you," she finally said, hardly speaking above a whisper. "l have told you before that you may easily kill me, but I cannot give up my faith in the Christ."

"Out with you then into the street, out and starve!" She crept across the room and knelt at his feet

"No! No!" she cried, "not that, not to be seized by some stranger to live a life of shame. Oh! no! no! not that. I have loved you, I never knew what love meant till I knew the Christ. I did not know how to love my baby till I knew Him. I will love you and be true to you. You may kill the body but you cannot kill my soul, nor what is in it. You may hate me but you cannot kill the love I have for you. I love you, oh, my husband."

Martha lifted her head and gazed up at him and when he raised his hand as if to strike she did not flinch. She slowly pushed her large sleeve to the shoulder and held out her arm for him to look at, and her lips trembled though her eyes did not falter .

"See this," she said, "how deep was the cut, how red it is, the scars are poor dumb little lips to plead my love. It was only a few weeks ago that you were sick and rambled in your talk, you and the neighbors thought it would do you good and I took the knife myself and cut the flesh out of my arm for you. Our ancestors have always thought it good to take from the living body flesh to feed the sick. I know not whether it was good, but I loved you and gave you my body to eat. I would have done more, much more had I known how, nor do I now ask for release from pain. You have beaten me to the floor but I should not upbraid you, yea here am I, a helpless woman for you to trample on if you see fit. God

made woman so, nay, not only so, but I freely yield myself to you, it is my love and I am glad such is woman's lot. See." she added kneeling at his feet, "I have cared for you in sickness and health. I have fed you of my own flesh, nay, nor would I deny you my life did not God forbid, still I may not forbid what I may not prevent; if it seems good, strike," and she reached for the bloody ironing stick and handed it to him and bowed her head, 'Strike," she said in a whisper, "if it seems good, strike."

"Ha-a-a!" raved the man, "follow the traditions of our ancestors, would you? Ready to do for me what others are ready to do, are you? Tell me now, you grovelling hypocrite, tell me now, if at my grave you would mourn the stated period and then honor me by taking your life, three years of mourning, then your life, answer me now, would you? Do it would you? Would you do that?"

Martha rose to her feet, her lips trembling. "'Think not, my husband, that it would be a lack of love or loyalty to you should I not take life for the sake of your memory should God call you hence before He calls me; to take one's life is the crime of murder, so says the law of my new faith. Indeed, as you well know, there has not lacked sages among our people who questioned the right of such disposal of human life, and if I mistake not, I have heard you say that such acts exhibited more pride in the anxiety to obtain fame on the part of the one who commits the deed, than disinterested loyalty to the memory of the dead." Martha spoke rapidly as if she feared interruption and continued, "While life lasts I am yours for you to bless, to curse, to bruise, and, then, after death,"—Martha paused and clasped her hands— "O, if you will, we shall live together forever, forever. Listen, it burns within my soul, yes, it shall be so, it shall be forever."

He rose to his feet trembling with returning passion. She looked steadily into his face for a moment, then announced that she would go. She steadied herself against the wall and looked around the room. She started at the sight of blood on the floor, then felt of her hair and looked at her hands; she took the dish of water and washed the signs away from the floor, went to a box that stood against the wall and took from it a white waist; took off the one smeared with blood and rolled it up carefully. She brushed back her hair and washed it out as best she could and tied it thick over the wound; it hid the signs of violence. She straightened her skirts about her; and kneeling to the baby, the child climbed upon the back of its trembling mother. She opened the door and stepped down into the street,

The crowd had not entirely dispersed. They knew that something would take place when Martha should again disobey her husband, and they were determined to see the end. The crowd opened right and left,

parting to let her through, but not a sympathetic face could she see in all that number. Well did she know it would be perilous to any one in that town to befriend her. She passed the place where the services had been held; the door was closed. She enquired for Mr. Kim and was told that be had left the town. With a heavy heart she moved out along the main street, while each step she took was accompanied with excruciating pain. She turned her face to the north, for many Christians, it was said, lived in the north, and then, too, many hundred li to the north was her father's family.

Her parents had yielded to a burst of solicitude on the part of Mr. Cho at the time of his marriage and they moved to Standing Stone but were soon glad to leave the neighborhood of their irascible son-in-law. Where in the distant north they had gone Martha did not know. Eight years before, her husband had brought her from her mountain home a thousand li distant and she had never heard from her father's relatives since that day. Whether dead or alive she knew not. She had written, since she had become a Christian and had learned the art of writing, but no answer had come, probably, she reflected, the mail had never reached the mountain district.

When some distance from the village she sat down by the side of a tall bunch of ferns to think matter over. “One thousand li,” she murmured to the baby as she looked into the child's face without seeing it, “one thousand li, at thirty li a day, is about thirty three days,” and added slowly, “six days added for Sundays will make thirty-nine days,” she repeated, with a new look of anxiety creeping into her eyes, “and I must eat that I may feed the baby, but I will work where I can and then travel till hunger compels me to do so again,” then she paused with a gasp, and the unseeing eyes fixed upon the baby's face changed from a look of anxiety to fear, and her white lips whispered the word “Dangers, O, the dangers! will some one seize me and sell me to the highest bidder?” and an ague chilled her.

The baby crept up to her mother and the tiny hands found their way around her neck; her eyes looked into her mothers eyes and she pressed her nose against her mother's . nose and burst into a laugh of glee. Martha shook herself as from a nightmare and the corners of her mouth lifted and a faint smile flitted an instant across her face. She then knelt down by the long ferns and said “Our Father,” and here her prayer stopped, while low, soft moans crept out from her lips. She knelt till the child tugged at her skirts. Again she said “O my Father,” and arose from her knees.

Twilight had already settled over the landscape when Martha arose and bound her baby to her back. She struggled on while the child soon

was lost in sleep with its little head lying on one side against its mother's back. The last of September with its hot days and chilly nights were at hand. Martha passed several small villages but did not have the courage to enter or ask shelter for the night. She knew no one living on the road. All her eight years had been spent with him in the village she had called home. She finally stopped at the door of a thrifty home. She looked into a well lighted room where the family were partaking of their evening meal; she was hungry, and her knees trembled with weariness; how she ached from the pain of her recent bruises and wounds! She hesitated a moment to pluck up courage, when a dog bounded out at her. Then she turned away and passed through the hamlet into the chill air of the night. It had become very dark, but up against the sky line was silhouetted a mass of trees. She hastened on and found they surrounded the graves of some wealthy clan. For a moment she paused, in fear of entering the cemetery, then in sheer weariness dismissed her fears and flung herself beneath a tree on the soft earth by the side of a mound but newly made. She held the babe in her arms to shield it from the chill air of the night.

Martha slept, then awoke shaking with cold. She took off her skirts and rolled the baby in them and walked back and forth till she had beaten a path by the side of the grave. How long the night seemed, and how weary she was. When the light crept up into the east, Martha looked around her and in front of the huge mound that had served as a shield from the north wind was a large stone, and in front of it a bowl filled with rice. She ran to it and picked it up greedily, then slowly set it down. ‘Sacrificed to the dead,” she said, “it does not belong to me.” She turned resolutely from it and taking the baby again on her back plodded wearily on. A stream crossed her path and with gratitude she bathed her face, and hands, and arms. Soon the sun came up and gradually turned the cold of the night into a scorching heat, and the baby grew peevish. Finally she passed a company of farmers who had paused in their work for their mid-forenoon lunch. Around them stood the women of their households who had just removed from their heads the heavy loads of rice. Martha paused and looked longingly at the food. One of the men laughed coarsely and she turned to the road in a panic and ran as fast as her burden would allow. A general laugh followed. Some distance on Martha looked back. The figure of a woman had detached itself from the company and was hastening after her. Martha's fears were not allayed but she could not move faster—her strength was fast going. The stranger approached and in a subdued voice asked her if she could be of aid. At the proffer of help Martha stood still in the road and looked at the stranger in open-eyed astonishment The kindly face reassured her, and Martha sat down by the

road and for the first time gave herself up to tears.

"Don't cry," the woman said, "it would be unsafe if passers by thought you were unprotected." The words brought Martha to her feel

"No, not so fast," said the stranger, "You have not told me where you came from nor who you are, but you need not fear me. I am a Christian, and Christians harm no one."

"A Christian," Martha repeated, and a glad light spread over her face. "I am, too," she added. An hour later Martha was sitting by a little table in the home of her new found friend. The villagers were interested in the sudden appearance of the strange woman with her baby. "Where had she come from, and where was she going?" were the words that flitted from lip to lip.

## CHAPTER X BALI

The singular incident of the arrival of Martha in Riceland unaccompanied by a protector excited the liveliest interest of three outlaws, who on hearing the report, with common impulse, repaired to a certain wine shop in the center of the town, and with the ingeniousness of bunters eager on the trail of the mountain deer, planned for her capture.

"Good wine," observed Kochili, nonchalantly, when the inn-keeper remembering tl1e reputation of his guest, hastened obsequiously to place before them the best of his stock. "good, I say, sparkles brighter than the damsel's eyes."

"Damsel, did you say? Have you seen them?" asked Wontaki.

"Seen what?"

"Eyes?"

"They are mine," interrupted Bali with a tone of finality. "Yours?" was the astonished inquiry of his two companions.

"Mine," was the dogged reply.

The first speaker took from his pocket a set of dice and laid them on the table; he glanced quisically into the face of his chief and said, "Bali, you would do well to take to yourself a wife, quit the road and settle down. Ah! this is getting interesting, you will keep an inn and obsequiously serve us gentlemen. An inn is the only place in our land to show off the industries of one's wife to advantage. You have a long vision, sir. It is said few things escape the eyes of Bali, and I doubt not you have seen her; your stupid doggedness in the purpose to possess her is a mighty plain declaration of her lofty value. I am, therefore, eager, sir, to stake chances." He rattled the dice in the face of his bold companion. "Young and pretty,

eh? What would you do with the baby?" 'She is mine," repeated Bali, as he took up the dice in acceptance of the challenge and tossed them on the table.

Bali was the oldest of the three, nearing thirty-five, gigantic in stature with a bold look on his handsome face. His clothing was made of the material worn by the upper class, his manners were polished and his language refined; he owned the most pretentious house in the town and its hospitable doors swung open to the high and low at all times. He was feared by all, popular with the common people, and greatly hated by the officials, in which fact he gloried. He was the most feared, the most loved, and the most successful robber in the history of his generation. His two companions were of the ordinary type of Korean youths whose lives had gone astray. With many others of a lawless band they worshipped at the feet or their incomparable robber chief.

"You want her too, Wontaki?" asked Bali, turning a quisical look at the youngest of the three, "when did you put up your top,-knot?"

"My top-knot is as lawful as yours," .replied the lad, "though you should prove it not lawful, I have not been a law breaker as long as you, for if you have worn your hair in a top-knot for fifteen years without marrying, being contrary to law you are the greater criminal, and I, as the more innocent one, should have the maiden."

"If," replied Bali, "I have been the greater sinner I should now have the privilege of covering my transgressions. Think, ·Wontaki, how happy would be the officials did I become a good citizen by marrying this widow and her child. I suppose," he added musingly, "if I carry off the widow I shall have to accept the babe also, but babies seldom survive the smallpox devil"

"Law?" broke in Kochili, "what law do we acknowledge, save the law of our own nimble feet and hands. The magistrate has a law by which he fleeces his neighbors, he calls it good; he is the father of his people. We hold up an over- fed, much-pampered friend of the magistrate and are called robbers; the world is horrified. Strange philosophy!"

"Come now," interrupted Bali, again taking his tum at the dice, "you are irrelevant: we have heard you talk that stuff many times. See I am leading, the widow is nearly at my feet."

"Widow? How do you know she has no husband?" asked Wontaki.

"Ha-a!" was the reply, "little difference will it make to us. If she has one it is his business to chain her down. If there were no trouble would she leave him, and if he has taken another and prettier one would he not be grateful to us for relieving him of further trouble from this one? In any case what care we of the road whether our neighbors like it or no?

If there is danger of trouble may we not sell her to some money-burdened friend who may not know her history? Furthermore, it is our trade to court trouble."

"Well," continued Kochili, persisting in his own self justifying philosophy, "if they fleece the people we have the same right."

"See here," Bali interrupted, "I don't keep the road because the magistrates fleece the people. My profession has other reasons. Don't you be a sneak and say you are mean because some one else is mean. I hate a coward."

"Come now, your Excellency," said the youth in mock politeness, "tell us why did you take to the road? They say you once were a magistrate. If that were so I am grieved that you have no brotherly feeling for them."

Bali looked attentively at the young face a moment. "I will tell you this, lad," he said, "if you are ever a coward, I will kill you. Do you understand? I am a robber because the magistrates and people in general are cowards. I rob out of sheer irritation and hatred of cowards.

"Magistrate? Yes I was once; paid ten thousand yang for the honors. The trouble with my career was I took to reform. After getting well settled in my office and taking full stock of my half decayed dingy quarters, my obsequious servants and the half starved people whom I was sent to fleece and incidentally to prevent them from devouring one another, I made effort to secure exact information concerning my people. I made excursions at unexpected times among them, generally unattended and in disguise. I found they had been so oppressed by my predecessors that their lives were dull, slavish, cowardly, but they were full of affection and capabilities. I set to work to help them. They were slow and suspicious; I was patient, and in three years they were prosperous above all their neighbors, and became strong and independent because of personal security. For six months there was not a law suit, and my prisons held nothing but rats and cockroaches.

"At this time the governor made a feast in honor of his birthday and invited all the magistrates of the province. It would have been discourteous not to have responded to the invitation. I really do not know the name of the particular demon that accompanied me that day as I never consulted these men and women who hobnobbed with devils and give ghostly counsel. Undoubtedly one of the unnamed from the fraternity of demons got into my libations that rooming.

"As I rode through the country and saw the poverty I grew mad. I threw off my robes of office, sent my chair and coolies back, and walked the rest of the distance unattended. The walk was nothing, but of course a

guest covered with sweat, dust, and appearing before the governor without the official dress, was a surprise and an offense. When I saw the luxury of the feast, dancing girls, and most of all the cowardly faces of my colleagues my choler increased. I finally got up from the table, and, I fear, with a good deal of ostentation went to the door and deliberately ran my finger down my throat and gagged to the best of my ability. As I think of it now I believe it was a brave act, for to tell the truth I was hungry and did not want to lose my dinner. I then stood before the governor and his friends and made a few remarks. I fear I charged them with more vile things than they were guilty. Among many things, I told them that for me to eat food squeezed from widows and orphans made me sick. That statement was a lie for when I am hungry it is hard to make me sick. Finishing my oration I stormed out of doors and back to my prefecture.

"As I expected, four weeks later an official appeared from the Capital and placed me under arrest. I finally appeared before an official who mouthed a trumped-up charge. I was hastened to prison and for three months I wore an iron bracelet and helped jingle a chain with a gang who keeps the streets clean in the Capital. I was furious, not over the arrest, for why should I be angry for what I had deliberately invited. I wanted the privilege to fight though I had to pay the bill in the end. But I was not allowed a word of defense, nor permitted to see one of my accusers. When I shook off the chain and the pestiferous dust of the Capital I returned as you see to this province, and now there is not a governor, magistrate, or any other prominent coward who does not feel the presence of Bali. They have paid back the bill I held against them and they will pay it many times. Is it right to take such revenge? I did not say so. Yet right and wrong are frequently chummy bed fellows in our land of violence. At least what I do is not the act of a coward. Ah, they are sorry I attended that feast, and that I served in the chain gang. I really fear that the governor has had no more birthday celebrations. He would think many times now before doing a thing so rash.' Bali laughed and his companions joined him heartily as the weak will always laugh with the strong.

"Am I afraid? Fear and I have parted company. Still I know law will finally triumph. Mine is a hazardous game," he added grimly.

The game of dice had been suspended and the youngest of the group fingered them carelessly, and when Bali glanced at the dice during his narrative, the youth closed his hand over them impatiently. His chief had led him into many a wild escapade and now he leaned forward over the table to learn more of the deeds of his hero.

"Go on," he said eagerly, "they don't like it? Tell us of it." "Come, now, the dice," said Bali. But the lad put them behind his back.

"Tell us," he urged, "how about the magistrate you visited, recently. Did you really break his head?"

"No," Bali continued good naturedly, "I did not break his head. You know why I visited him, every one knows. He knows too, now. He ruined more people than any magistrate in this province, which might be to his personal credit had he been compelled to surmount difficulties to reach his victims, but it takes little bravery to slaughter cattle. He used his runners to trample out the lives of his people without ever looking at his victims. On that night I took some of our best men with me and we fired off guns in the town till every head had disappeared within doors. I suspect that many did not stop by simply withdrawing from the street but the fleas under the mats had huge companions that night. When we reached the magistrate's house the brave runners were in hiding about the place. I left them to my gang and pulled the magistrate out of his closet myself, and sat him down in the middle of his office room. I told him who I was and he got down on the floor and begged for his life. He even gave me the keys to his money box without my asking for them, but I flung them in his face. I waited till he was through whimpering, and then I spat in his face and warmed him with my hands, first one cheek and then the other. My hands are not light, and they fairly lifted him from the mat. I did it because he was a coward. He did not even threaten me, but blubbered incontinently. When my fellows had pulled all the runners out of their hiding places I ordered the magistrate out on the front veranda to sit in judgment over them. I told him to order the runners to punish their trusted leader who had under the command of the magistrate, and also without his command, inflicted so much suffering upon the people. He did so, and the runners seized their leader and put him under the paddle with thirty blows. I pointed out another and then another till ten out of fifteen had been paddled, then the ones who had suffered turned upon the others who had done the beating, without any command from the magistrate, and with such good will did they do their work that I finally ordered them to stop. When the work was done I ordered the whole pack to prison and locked them in. Cowards! there were enough of them to have eaten us up. They knew it but were afraid."

"Some of my men wanted to put the magistrate under the paddle too, but I did not want him to leave the place for he could never recover from so great a humiliation and I had use for him. Before the matter was settled he crawled to me and I spurned him with my foot, then told him this was but a hint of what lay in store for him. It was also a delicate hint, I said, of the fact that he had neglected his social duties. I told him with great pains where I lived and that he would find me at home on a certain

date and I would expect to see his card in the hand of a trusted servant who should come riding on a white horse. I expected to receive a card of liberal size, blood red, but I did not want to see his cowardly face, as his under lip hung down too low. I would expect a suitable present to accompany his card, something that would represent the measure of his love for me. I need not say that it all came to hand in good time not only once but more times than was for the good of the magistrate's income. What did I do with the money? I have to live, you know, and my men have to live, and then too, many who had been distressed became my friends when little sums came back to them, and the magistrate was sorry to see them my friends."

A neighbor entered the inn and the conversation of the three men changed. "What," said the neighbor, "playing without stakes? How mild you have become! Why Bali, you must have reached your dotage! playing like a maiden."

"Stakes," said Bali, reflectively, '"why, this is a maidenly game." As they continued the game, a tense quietness settled over the players. At last Won-taki threw the dice with great deliberation, the three held their breath, then the young man lifted the box and threw back his head with a long ringing laugh. He flung himself into a corner of the room in a paroxism of mirth, while Bali looked at him with an expression of quizzical interest. The visitor mystified at these actions recalled to mind the old character of the gamblers and hastened out.

"Say, youngster," said Bali, "twenty two did you say you were? What will you do with the thing, the hag, a widow with a brat?"

"I heard that she was young and pretty," said Won-taki, controlling himself and looking up sharply into the face of the older man.

"Did you?" replied the other with a lazy drawl, "do you think that husbands allow young and pretty wives loose on the streets? Poor lad, she is yours, and it is well. After all," he added with a yawn and stretched himself out as if he had not the slightest interest in the affair, "it is no wonder that men get tired of such old shrews and turn them off," be continued meditatively, "but pshaw, you can stand it for a while and then— "

"Then what?" said Won-taki.

"Why, sell her or shoot her," was the reply.

"You wanted her yourself;" Won-taki said half angrily. "Yes," was the reply, "I would have accepted her if she had fallen to my lot. There is an appetite in capturing game for one's self whether it is a hare, or a woman," and he again stretched himself on the mat as if for sleep .

"What are you doing there," cried Won-taki, angrily, "are you not

going to help me get her?"

"Why, yes, lad," Bali replied lazily, "of course you will have to treat our crowd. It will take, say twenty men, and it will cost something. When you are ready just say the word and I will send around and have our set together."

"How much will that be," he asked, struggling to keep the dismay out of his voice.

"Don't know," said Bali, carelessly. "It will be according to the amount the crowd will demand, modified by the amount of grit and endurance you may have."

"Come now," said Won-taki, with a burst of anger, "I see through your game; you know I have no money, and you want the woman. You couldn't win with skill: Now you bully me out of my rights. Come, now, you want her, do you? You want the old shrew, the old hag, the old thing with the brat; You do, do you? How much will you give?"

Kochili burst into a laugh, and Bali turned an amused face to the boy. "Give you, lad? Why, that is fair. Let me see. Suppose I say the first pickings at our next raid."

"First pickings," the boy replied with contempt, "first pickings with the second and third and many more, may mean no more than a handful of brassware. Five hundred yang for the maiden and her baby," said the boy with decision.

Bali's eyes sparkled with interest. He liked his young companion in roguery. He sat up and plunged into the most delightful of all Asiatic pastimes. From 500 yang the price gradually fell like the barometer in cold weather. The companions knew that nothing was ever denied Bali when he had set his heart upon it, and when he named 150 yang and the first right to the pickings from their next forage, the lad knew that further concession was useless. He grumbled a good deal, but was secretly greatly pleased over the results of the dice.

"When will you call the twenty men?" asked Won-taki. "Twenty?" Bali repeated reflectively, "twenty—perhaps that will be a little more than necessary, since I have had time to think of it—Perhaps we three will be enough."

Bali looked at his companions gravely and ordered Won-taki to hunt up a rope.

## CHAPTER XI MARTHA'S FLIGHT

Martha, feeling secure in the house of her new friend, had laid down early in the evening in the utmost exhaustion, and was soon lost in profound slumber. The moon had just climbed over the cliff back of the village, and was pouring a flood of light into the narrow valley and lit up the street and tiny room of the sleeper as though insistent that all the world was in peace. Slumber had chased fear from Martha's face and. the babe at her side smiled in her sleep—her world was at rest.

A hundred yards down the deserted street, three dark figures emerged from an alley-way and moved rapidly toward the house. A pestiferous dog set up a howl and was instantly joined by a chorus that ranged down the whole length of the street, and out to the farthest hut of the town, making a pandemonium of noise that awoke the town to listen. Wise people remained well behind closed doors, but others more curious than discreet, peered out till Bali's gigantic figure sent them panic stricken inside. "Bali on a foray." they said, "but none or our business; a generous fellow for whom any of us would fight, but with strange ideas of the rights of property ownership."

At the sound of tile dogs Martha sprang to her feet with every sense alert. The air seemed to palpitate with peril. She stood with her eyes fixed vacantly upon the moon-lit wall opposite her, her ears straining for approaching sounds. Presently a shuffling of sandals came faintly through the mud walls, then at a bound she seized her babe and bound it to her back, and stepped into her sandals.

As quickly as she had moved, her enemies were as quick; already a rough hand was shaking the front door and her keen ear caught the sounds of persons on both sides of the house clambering over the wall to get in the rear. A feeling of faintness made her giddy; it was but for an instant, self-control returned, and, with steady hand, she swiftly undid the fastenings of the door and slipped noiselessly into the yard. As she closed the door she heard the door from the adjoining room open and her host's hoarse whisper gave wings to her feet

"Into the gutter ·and under the fence!" was what she heard.

There was an instant tugging of the door on the inside and Martha knew it had been fastened to cover up her trail. With the speed of a fawn she skirted the sides of the yard where the shadows hung deepest, and reaching a point nearly opposite the house her foot slipped into a ditch, and she fell into a heap at the bottom. For an instant she lay half stunned, then without rising she crawled lengthwise of the ditch till she had passed under the fence and found herself directly beneath a pile of cane that had once been used for a fence, but was now piled on the bank of the ditch to be burned. She paused to listen at the execrations of one of her pursuers

who had been entangled in a pile of rubbish; it assured her that she was not discovered. She lay still a moment hushing the baby who had set up a whimper at the shock from the fall. It took but a moment to pull a mass of the old fence rubbish down upon her. The cane was well worn and short and would hardly cover the length of her body so that lying on her back she gazed through them, up into the brilliant moon light, while her breathing and each fretful movement of the child caused the stalks to move with frightful distinctness. Directly, two of Martha's pursuers met on the opposite sides of the ditch. The robber chief had placed men at different points to cut off any possible chance for escape and he had committed the task of seizure to another while he himself stood guard. Martha peering through the cane could distinctly see their faces. One was young, lithe, and quick of movement: the other towered above her, huge in the moon-light.

Not a word was spoken till a third approached the larger man and announced that the woman had fled. At the information the giant turned upon the speaker with a fierce imprecation. "Speak," said he. "Where?"

The younger man who had stood on the opp0sile side of the ditch leaped lightly across, and joined the others.

"We have searched the house through and she is not there," was the reply.

"The back door?"

"It was locked."

"What excuses had the family?"

"The man was confused and frightened out of his wits, but the woman brazenly said that the stranger had slept in a certain room but had left without informing any one, and they did not know where she had gone. They showed me the room and it did not appear to have been occupied."

At that moment Martha's baby whimpered and the three men faced the ditch, while the youngest sprang into it shouting: "Here she is." He ran a few steps toward the bundle of cane and nearly stumbled over a sow with her family of pigs. They scampered squealing from beneath his feet while the mother followed with a loud angry "honk, honk."

"Fool," said the giant., "don't you know the difference between the voice of a woman and the grunt of a hog?"

"Well, it was you who threw the dice to so little purpose, sure, you should have had the pig sty."

"Peace," the giant exclaimed, and added sternly, "call the gang and search every house in town. He who misses a shadow will suffer, You hear, Bali says it, go! I will search this house myself," he added, "fool I was to commit it to others."

They turned their backs on the ditch and walked to the cane fence. Bali tore it apart scorning to return by way of the wall over which he had climbed with so much difficulty. He walked to the door, out of which Martha had escaped, and shook it furiously demanding entrance. The door swung open and two men entered, then Martha heard it closed. She lay shaking as though with an ague, and was tortured with her long cramped position. She prayed that she might be able to lie still and the baby would go to sleep and not cry. How long it seemed.

At last a voice whispered somewhere above her "Martha! Oh, Martha!" she listened and it was repeated.

"Here," she called faintly, and stirred beneath the cane stalks. The moon had cast the shadow of the fence across her face.

"Quick," called the voice of her late hostess, "beyond this ditch is a high bank, follow' it where it runs to the left till you come to the road. It will be some distance beyond the town, then turn to the right and flee for your life, go! it is thirty li to the river, hasten! No—stay, a bit of paper may help you."

Martha had stood out boldly in the shadows while talking but now crouched low in the ditch listening to the patter of her friend's feet as she ran toward the house. She waited with bated breath to the barking of the dogs through the town. Now their· voices rose and fell; now grew quiet: and now again rose into a tumult. She knew that the robber chief was doing his work well. Presently a hand was stretched through the fence, it held a note. "A boat leaves northward at daylight. My brother is a Christian. This note will help you. Go! Bali the robber chief is at your heels. God and your nimble feet alone will save you. Peace be with you. Hasten!"

Martha hesitated. "Go! go!" cried her friend, "each moment is filled with peril, my house also, go! and God be with you."

A shuffle of feet approaching the house gave force to the command, and Martha bending low sped rapidly along the ditch till the abrupt drop of the field hid her from view and the high bluff led her northward, then, faithful to her directions, she turned sharply to the right and found her feet in the broad road leading toward the river. She paused a moment to listen and to hush her baby, and then ran with all speed till she gasped for the want of breath; again she paused and listened `then moderated her pace. As she journeyed the moon light cast strange shadows across the path, filling her with fear. At times she would pause where the shadows were darkest, fearing to proceed. Once she made a circuit into a field, to pass around a dark object by the wayside and found when she stood on the opposite side that it was a stump: thus she lost much precious time.

Soon she passed through a hamlet, and breathed freely when she found that no one was moving. Dogs plunged into the street, but they frightened her not, they seemed like companions and she would have welcomed the most pestiferous and noisy to journey with her. The crowing of the early cock filled her with panic. "Thirty li," she repeated, "and the boat leaves at daylight," and she fled on. When the moon sank far down into the west it filled the hollows with deep shadows into which she stumbled, sometimes falling while the baby sleeping on her back would be flung about and awakened by the sudden shock.

She grew weary, so weary, her legs would scarcely carry her. When the moon sunk quite out of sight she sat down for a moment's rest, but when she tried to rise it was nearly impossible; after that she dared not repeat the experiment of taking a rest.

How long the darkness seemed! Finally the east grew gray, then long streaks of light crept out from the horizon; and banks of light slowly piled up in the sky. Martha turned her eyes from the heavens to the rough road. She argued to herself that the river ought not to be far distant. She had traveled an hour before the first cock crew, then it must have been more than two hours since. She was sure she had traveled thirty li, but the road seemed to stretch on with no promise of an end. When the sun arose she ran on to an elevation in great anticipation, but when she climbed to the top of the road which had. degenerated into a path, it led out to another rise with no sign of a river. An hour later, she found herself on a high bank overlooking a great 'alkali plain covered with long stretches of mud and slime, with here and there an elevation of a few feet covered with coarse swamp grass. In the middle of the plain was a dark line. And Martha recognised it as the river for which she was searching. Then she knew that she had lost her way and the path she had followed had led her far toward the sea where no boats could possibly be moored.

"O, what shall I do?" she cried swinging her baby forward upon her hip and gazing into her small blinking eyes, "we have wandered from our way, and the boat has already left. O what shall we do?" "It is a leopard's skin," she again murmured to the baby, looking across the salt marsh which was spotted here and there with tufts of wiry grass and at a dark line which ran through the center westward "A leopard it is and will devour us. Shall we do it baby? Shall we wade across to the river and watch for a passing boat? Think you, baby, we shall be devoured?" At a long distance to the right she caught a glimpse of the sheet of open water. "The sea," she murmured in dismay.

Lying between her and the dark line indicating the river were curiously shaped buildings. They were oval, and appeared not unlike the

bowl of a pipe turned upside down. They were much larger than an ordinary house. The roofs were covered with straw. The one nearest sent a column of smoke straight skyward. Long she stood gazing at the curious building, and its appearance fascinated her. There out on the marsh was loneliness and seeming security; to hide in a lonely hut, or, to take a boat drifting out to the great sea where man could not follow—how good it would be!

In the distance, a huge load of brush wood was being carried across the plain toward the smoking building. Beneath it somewhere was a man but so huge was the load that it seemed a thing of life moving of its own accord. Martha watched it approach one of the strange buildings.

"Brush-loads do not have legs, do they baby," she said looking into the baby's eyes again as though trying to find an answer to a question that filled her mind. "Shall we do it, baby, shall we do it?"

As she looked again over the plain, a shadow shot out on the marsh and Martha looked up and saw a threatened tragedy enacted in midair. A pigeon was fleeing from the talons of a falcon; she darted this way and that with a frightened cry, then shot out over the salt marsh. Beyond, in the distance, was a wooded hill and at the top a great tree. Towards it the pigeon turned her flight, zigzagging this way and then that, always just beyond the talons of her enemy. Across the salt marsh it flew, over the distant houses up into the hill. Martha watched with bated breath till the pigeon took refuge in the thicket surrounding the lonely tree. Martha gazed long till the falcon having circled around and around till weary, darted off in search of other prey. Then she lifted the baby again to her back and turned her face to the lonely building in the salt marsh down near the sea. "He who clothes the lilies and cares for the birds will care for me," she murmured.

The building that Martha approached through the saline mud flats was of unusual size. It arose out of the mud mound like a huge bee hive. The walls of mud were covered with thatch.

When she left the high land it seemed that the sea was a long way off, but she was soon surprised to discover how close it really was at hand. Then it occurred to her that the tide was hastening in. The fact quickened her pace. How rapidly it approached and seemed bent on the purpose of cutting her path ahead of her. She slipped on the slimy ooze and then her feet would sink into the sticky mass half way over her sandals. At every step scores of crabs scurried from her, sliding sidewise over the slimy surface, they were here, there, everywhere mocking, jeering. How quickly the water rose! the building was many rods away when a long thin arm of the rising tide reached out into the recesses of the plain and curled up at

her feet. She stepped lightly over it, but ahead another arm was stretching out and fingering its way rapidly around a turf of wire grass. Behind these advancing forces seemed to be the whole sea, pressing forward upon the great plain. Martha ran. She reached a higher ridge which extended direct to the salt kiln. It was only an elevation of two feet and would also soon be covered. One of her sandals stuck in the ooze at the top of the ridge, but Martha did not dare to replace it. On she ran and the sandal left was a tell tale mark to any one who cared to follow. On the distant bank she had so lately left stood a man looking out across the marsh and the sight put speed to Martha's feet.

## CHAPTER XII IN DEFENCE OF A WOMAN

If Martha had known the character of the occupant of the salt kiln she would have turned her steps from the oncoming tide and fled as if death had been at her heels. As she approached the kiln the desolate waste and the forbidding appearance of the thatched building caused her to pause and look back regretfully upon her path. The tide was fast closing over it and little rivulets curled around a knoll here, and lapped over an elevation there, now rushing along a narrow depression as though bent on some furious errand; then pausing for breath; again gathering its forces, pushed forward, insistent, relentless. To return was impossible, and her eyes sought the distant green bank and what she saw sent her in panic toward the salt kiln. A tall man stood in the path she had left, shading his eyes with his hand, gazing in her direction.

She thought of her tell-tale sandal half covered with water, and praying for the hastening of the tide to cover it from sight she fled into the building.

The inside of the salt kiln was, if possible, more forbidding than the outside. The walls were of mud and loose stone, the roof was covered with straw, and the rafters were exposed to view. The rafters were so crooked that they often seemed to double on themselves, twisting this way and that as if they had battled with vines and creeping things of the forest, till, becoming so crooked that when placed on the roof they seemed to run twice the necessary distance in traveling from the ridge to the wall and were beaten and disfigured beyond nature's recognition. The rafters rested on a projection of the wall at the top, thus lifting where the steam from a furiously boiling vat, and the uncontrolled smoke from the furnace found their way into the open. Within the building, at one side, was partitioned off a room which was begrimed with soot. In the center of the building,

facing the door, was built a massive furnace covered with a huge iron pan, which was filled with salt water after having the water saturated with the salt of the plain.

Before the furnace stood the strangest of all strange creatures, a man with a face so distorted and ugly that he did not seem to be a man.

On the outside of the gate of Martha's old home was a drawing of many colors by a renowned artist from the capital. It represented the artist's conception of the demon who watched the home against the intrusions of other less powerful spirits. The horrid aspect of the creature met the approval of the townspeople, as the most hideous of anything before imagined by human genius. "Worse than anything we have ever seen at the wayside shrine," said the people, and the artist was satisfied; and the home had felt secure till Martha had become a Christian, then it was feared that the bogie had lost his power. Martha had always passed the picture with a shudder and now there stood this being before her. His face was a combination of strangely distorted features, as distorted as were the rafters over his head.

The man's forehead was low and broad filled with many wrinkles which were twisted into small knots as if their owner had meditated on some diabolical scheme and surprised his thoughts with an impulse to leer or grimace at his intended victim. The eyes slanted toward the nose and seemed to bulge from his face, while his cheekbones rose up agressively before them. His nose was flat and broad. His mouth stretched direct across his face. His protruding teeth hung on either side like boars tusks and easily separating his heavy lips. The broad chin shot out still farther giving the whole face the impression of sloping from the forehead to the point of his chin. His lips had the habit, when their owner was meditating, of puckering forward as though on the point of whistling, then taking panic, hastily recoiling on the teeth in profane denial that they ever contemplated a whistle or a smile. At such moments the lips flattened out on the teeth giving the face the expression of some wild beast showing his tusks in a snarl.

The man's dress was limited to a pair of white cotton trousers tied at the waist, the legs of which were rolled to his body. His skin was black from exposure to the sun and heat of the furnace, while blotches of furnace-black covered his face. and chest, through which perspiration formed muddy courses downward. His arms were unusually long and massive. At first sight he seemed to stoop, but the illusion was from the muscles that piled up on his shoulders and back in great masses. His legs and arms were knotted and gnarled like the oak of the mountain side where he cut the wood for his furnace. His hand was huge beyond belief.

When Martha ran into the door her fright carried her beyond the entrance. The strange man was bending over the fire, and at this moment he lifted a pine branch on the end of a large wooden fork and slowly forced it into the door of his furnace. Martha thought him a counterpart of the fiend administering torture to lost souls. As she paused filled with a new terror, the strange man stooped low over the fire. Having suddenly passed from the bright light, her eyes could scarcely penetrate the gloom caused by the smoke, steam, and deep shadows of the room. Out of the furnace door the flames licked hungrily past the stooping man, towards her. Above the furnace the huge pan boiled and roared like the romping of a thousand demons. To flee was impossible as the tide had made her a prisoner and she stood spellbound at the strange scene. Her eyes traveled over the stooping figure down the front of the arch where, in the cold masonry, was fixed a tiny mirror, from it the searching eyes of the strange creature gazed out at her. She felt giddy with fear, and struggled to gather her forces for flight. The wild man anticipated her movements and stepped suddenly between her and the door. Martha sank to the ground, her terrified gaze fixed upon the face of the apparition. All the superstitious stories of her heathen life and the lessons of future punishment she had learned from her catechism flashed into her mind. It seemed as if the painted thing on her husband's gate had preceded her to this dismal place to torment her.

"Mercy!" she gasped, "kind, good devil, mercy for the baby's sake, have mercy!" She clasped her hands and raised them to him imploringly, "Good, kind devil," she repeated, "have mercy on the baby and me." At the word "devil" a scowl darkened the face of the man which increased Martha's terror. She spread out the palms of her hands and rubbed them together appealingly, the while lips moved, but her voice refused her. "I fled here for refuge," she said at last, "I am as innocent of wrong as this babe. We are fleeing from violence, shame, death. Dear, kind, sir. have you a refuge here for baby and me?" She waited, but receiving no answer continued, "Only a few hours till the tide goes down sir, then we will away and trouble you no more."

The baby slipped from Martha's back, toddled towards the furnace, gazed for a moment at the fire, then struck her tiny hands together in glee. She looked up at the man's ugly face, then with feet far apart like a sailor bracing against the roll of a boat waddled to where stood the elfish creature, tugged at the wooden fork he held in his hand, then pointing toward the fire, laughed again.

"Madam," he said, glancing at the child, "fear me not, I harm not helpless babies and women." He spoke as one not in the habit of using his

voice. His words were preceded by a rumbling deep in his chest. "No, fear me not," he repeated. "You called me devil. At first it angered me. I perceive you did it innocently. I would that you had done tauntingly like many others; for if innocence calls me such names, surely my appearance must justify it." He turned to look at his fire as if the helpless woman and her petition were matters that had passed his attention. "Yet," he finally added with his face in the firelight, "the mirror tells me the same thing, yes the voice of innocence and the bit of glass are alike ruthless." Directly he again turned to the woman without .a smile on his ugly face. "I may be the devil on the outside," he said, "but I may prove to you that I am not on the inside. What can I do for you? Some may tell you my name is "devil" but it is not a name of my parents' choosing."

Martha was overwhelmed with shame and implored forgiveness. She told him how that she was passing through the village of Tangmal and had fled from a band of men. "Bali," she said, "I think Bali is the man who is following me."

The strange man listened with an imperturbable face to the tale, apparently having no interest in it, but at the word Bali, he stepped to the open door and shading his eyes looked long and earnestly across the salt marsh. He gave no hint of what he saw but he added fuel to the furnace till the flame roared fiercely beneath the pan and eagerly licked the mouth of the furnace. Martha watched his movements with a sense of returning fear. His eyes were red from the heat and when he turned them toward her they seemed like coals from the fire.

Presently he carried a huge bundle of pine boughs across the building and leaned them against the wall in easy range of his long fork. From the bundle to. the mouth of the furnace he scattered the broken boughs, He then motioned to Martha. She understood and picking up the baby, she bound it across her hip, and seated herself behind the pine boughs. He again returned to his furnace and fed it with the pine, as if no other thought than the care of his furnace had ever crossed his darkened mind. Martha gazed through the branches at him and again alarm filled her with what she knew not. "Perhaps," she thought, "it is the hideous face at the furnace; perhaps it is the coming evil from which I am trying to hide."

Presently the door was darkened by a huge figure. Martha instinctively recognized it as one of her pursuers. The man at the fire was still at his work, but he had stooped low and Martha could see that his eyes were fixed steadily upon the small mirror. As he looked, his lips stretched across his protruding teeth, showing his tusks, giving him a look half human, half animal, and altogether diabolical.

"Ho, here, stranger!" called the new comer, staring into the shadows, "Are you the man they call devil? Here I have been wading waist deep to get to your den. What, no welcome? I have been slipping and sliding over your cursed salt marsh for ten Ii. Why, good sir, hearing of your fame, I could do no less than make you a call when I come into your territory.—Even the devil, it seems to me, should have the privilege of the common courtesies from his neighbors. I, therefore, determined to call upon his satanic majesty though it does mean the ruin of my white suit and the ruffling of my unusually sweet temper. What, friend , no welcome?"

The man addressed straightened slowly and faced his visitor. He breathed several times with a hoarse rumbling and answered with great deliberation. "Your ignorance, sir, of the classics and common politeness makes your welcome scant. 'He who enters your home with a curse let his curse return to him.' Such. sir, say the sages and you may take your curses with you, and if the tide choke them in your throat happier will the doors be which you might otherwise darken."

"Indeed," replied Bali, "what have we here? the devil teaching the classics to be sure," and he flung his head back with a laugh at the dark scowling face of the hermit. "Come now," continued Bali, "I came not to quarrel with the imp of darkness, I am simply here to look for a lost sandal. No, don't look at my feet, I am looking for one more delicate than I wear. Sandals, you know, if you have ever had any experience with them, which I much doubt unless there are love affairs in hell, have a peculiar way of walking off when least expected, delicate ones I mean, ones made of hemp, ones of several colors, like this one, for instance," he added, pulling from his flowing sleeve Martha's sandal for inspection. "As I tracked its mate here to this place I thought perhaps your eyes might have caught sight of it. These useful organs of yours stand out from your head far enough to get sight of any such flitting bits of hemp."

The hermit snatched the sandal from Bali's hand, "Ha-a- a!" said he with a long rasping sound, "Where did you get my wife's sandal? That belongs to her. What business have you following up my wife and picking up her sandal?" and he glared at the handsome face of his visitor while his breath escaped as steam from an exhaust pipe.· "However," he added, "if you thought to restore to me my lost property and make the trip over this slippery cursed mud to my humble home to restore it, I will forgive you, but see that you do it not again." He glared again at Bali and turning, placed the sandal on the masonry of the furnace, then he bent over his fire as if he had dismissed both the matter of the sandal and the caller.

"Not so fast, old man, young man, devil, whatever you call

yourself; were it not said that your father lived in the neighborhood during the memory of this generation I should say that you were a thousand years old. The pile of muscles on your back proclaim you not so old; though, it seems to me, your memory is failing, for if I have been rightly informed the beautiful creature you called your wife has many years since refused the company of so sweet a being as yourself, and one night, slipped the cable with the out-going tide. If my eye-sight has not failed me I saw the mate to this slipper crossing these flats some two hours since, too substantial, it seems to me, to be the ghost of your fair companion. The slipper is the mate to the one you so rudely snatched from my hand and I want it. I am not in the habit of allowing people to treat me rudely, but whatever human beings might not do with impunity I might excuse in such an irresponsible creature as the devil, on the promise of future good behavior and the restoration of my property. Honest now, did the wife to the devil ever wear anything finer than a straw sandal? By a little jogging of your ancient memory, you may recall that she never wore anything quite so fine as this object of your ill temper."

The hermit arose slowly as if the muscles on his back were a heavy burden; he turned a deepening scowl upon Bali and looked at him a moment as if gathering his thoughts from the inmost part of his being.

"You?" he said at last, "you claim a right to this bit of hemp and to its mate? To ruin an oppressive magistrate or run to earth some noble game who has the power of self defence might have a redeeming feature in the eyes of a man whose profession is crime, but to track the helpless babe and its mother,-ha-a-a! the devil disgraces himself by talking to a thing like that. Such conceived villainy comes not from the yellow pit, but only from the foulness of your loathsome heart. My wife wear straw sandals? this dainty bit of hemp and also its mate are mine,—age follows youth, the white swan its black brother, gray hairs the raven locks, the fiend beneath your smooth skin will rage and waste you away, but the dainty foot that treads that sandal will never move at your bidding." The words of the hermit were delivered with indescribable scorn and hate.

"Ho! Ho!" exclaimed Bali, changing his tactics, and pretending to be highly amused. "A great welcome you give a stranger. Come now let us not quarrel. You know where this maiden is, and I can prove to you that she is mine by right. strange how her smooth tongue could deceive a rugged chap like you, but that is the way of the world. If my railer has lacked a bit in politeness, why, we are both men who deal with the rugged things, let that pass. The world says that your ugly face covers an honest heart, and I know you will give me what is honestly mine. Bali, the prince of the road, asks not of others what is his by right, but to atone for

seeming rudeness he will ask of the salt-plain-hermit the return of this chattel. Ah, man! a real woman would die in this hole and you could not keep her. Hunt a woman to earth like a hare? Why man you never visited the home of Bali. I would restore the poor deluded creature to comfort and luxury."

"Welcome? welcome?" interrupted the hermit, "No man ever entered my den so welcome as you are. Welcome? why, the hermit has longed to see you for the last three years, he has thought of you night and day, dreamed of you, sacrificed to the spirits, whenever he has been fool enough to sacrifice to anything that he might meet you. Welcome? Why, fool, I would not let you go for anything. I will entertain you here as long as you live." The strange creature lifted his chin higher and laughed with a voiceless gurgle but did not take his blood shot eyes from the face of the robber for an instant.

"As long as you live," he repeated, "nor will that burden me; your appetite will be faulty, a pigeon will eat more, and so warm will you be that your flesh will sizzle," again he laughed.

The robber though a brave man felt his flesh chill under the hermit's steady gaze and gibes. "Crazy," he muttered. He knew that to excite him more would be perilous, but being a powerful man trained in all the tricks of the wrestler, never having suffered defeat, the ultimate issue of a combat he feared not. But Bali knew that he had never before met such an antagonist.

At that moment, Martha's baby set up a cry and both men swung about in the direction of the pile of pine boughs. At a bound Bali had reached them and flung them aside. "Ah," he laughed bending over the shrinking woman, "it takes a nimble foot to escape Bali."

The next instant a pair of long arms seized him by the waist, lifted him in air and flung him as a bundle of pine boughs to the opposite wall. Bali came down with force and the wall saved him from measuring his length on the floor. The violent shock took his breath but he was instantly on his feet, and eyed the other man in astonishment, but the ready wit of the road came to his aid.

"A poor throw, devil. You play dice badly, as the maid will have a chance to testify. I am an expert and shall throw to a better purpose." He drew from his inner coat a long knife and twirled it as dexterously as would a Korean juggler. "See here friend, or enemy, which ever you choose to call yourself, you can't contend with this. I might tell you a secret. It might be pleasanter for you to learn it that way rather than by experience. I am-a wrestler and am familiar with all the tricks known to man. See, fiend, your head reaches not to my shoulder, trust not in the

muscles of your back. The Prince of the Road has never met defeat. Now, what think you of my dice?"

During the harangue, he had gradually approached the hermit, who was standing between him and the woman, his feet wide apart, his teeth showing, and his eyes fixed upon the face of the robber chief. Save the steady rise and fall of his huge chest, not a muscle moved. Martha crouched against the wall, her eyes dilated with terror, her glance shifting from the handsome face of the robber chief who still dexterously twirled the long knife and at the same time divested himself of his upper garments to the statue-like figure of the ugly creature who was offering his life for her. How it happened she did not know, but, like the darting of a shadow the hermit had moved and the long knife spun from Bali's hand to the rafters and fell between the two men. Bali sprang for the knife but before his fingers touched it he was again seized by the middle and lifted from the floor. He was not wholly surprised and like a cat that rights itself in mid-air, Bali straightened himself and his weight came down on his feet and in an instant the hermit rolled under him, but immediately the two men were on their feet, the knife still between them. Bali panted for breath, the work being furious, but the deep chest of the hermit rose and fell with even motion. The robber circled around his antagonist for advantage. He realized that the issue would be death either for him or the hermit and summoned his courage to fight as he never had fought.

The hermit kept his face to the robber and turned warily with him.

"Welcome?" he said, without seeming to open his lips, "the man who murdered my daughter is a thousand times welcome."

Bali stopped in his tracks. "Your daughter?" he exclaimed, "I did not do it. I give you the word of a man who however lawless his life, never broke his word to a friend or foe. l never did."

"Your gang did it, and the eager nimbleness with which you follow this woman forces the lie in your teeth. You are welcome here as long as you live. Death never welcomed its victim more than I welcome you."

Suddenly Bali saw an opening and sprang in. The impact was like the shock of two bulls in conflict. Bali was tight, the hermit went down under his superior skill, and wrapped in each other's embrace they both fought for the other's throats; they rolled upon the mud floor, writhed and fought with astounding fury. Finally the robber changed his tactics and

struggled to gain possession of the knife. His agility and skill seemed more than a match for the hermit's enormous strength; inch by inch they moved nearer the knife, then of a sudden Bali's hand shot out and closed over the hilt. To do so he loosed his hold upon the hermit, and with equal swiftness, the hermit flung his long arm around the robber

chief, pinning his arms to his sides. The hermit's legs locked around those of his antagonist, his long chin settled in to the robber's neck, forcing his head backward. The robber chief gasped, collected all his mighty strength to throw off his antagonist. The huge muscles on the hermit's back and shoulders bulged as those of an ox and his chin sank deeper into the robber's neck. Presently the robber's arms and legs relaxed their struggle and he lay quiet. The hermit was loath to relax his hold but at last raised his ugly face and looked at the man under him, then slowly arose, picked up the knife, ran his finger over the keen edge, his chest the while rising and falling, as a blacksmith's bellows. With deliberation he walked to the furnace, placed the knife on the wall and picking up his long wooden fork, he filled the furnace with pine brush and gazed into the fire as if the scene just past had been merely a dream which he had already forgotten. Presently the man on the floor moved, then with a snarl and the quickness of a tiger the hermit sprang upon him, seized him by the hair, dragged him to the fire, and with incredible swiftness bound him hand and foot. Again the hermit bent over the fire, and within the building profound silence prevailed. The subdued whining of the fire as it leaped up the chimney, the fretful bubbling of the cauldron and the lap, lap of the tide on the outside of the kiln, the corpse-like figure stretched before the fire, and the ugly face bending over the flames, had in the scene more terror to Martha than the battle of these two giants: the silence had in it a prelude to something still more ghastly and terrible.

Presently, Bali gasped and moved, then tugged fiercely at his bonds. He raised himself partly on one elbow, scowled fiercely around him till his eyes rested on the back of the hermit, then again tugged at his bonds till he found the effort useless.

"Here you," he called, "what are · you going to do with me?"

The hermit extended his long fork, dragged a bundle of pine to the furnace, and forced it through the door. The fire caught it fiercely. The hermit's lips flattened out on his ugly teeth, his rumbling breath gurgled in his throat, and without moving his lips said "Not hot enough yet."

Bali's face grew ashen for a moment; then collecting himself said, "Into the furnace, is it? To sizzle, am I? Bali is under this time, Bali—the prince of the road. Ah! ha! The prince of the road at whose name Governors and Magistrates tremble, gone under in a square fight Ha, ha, now see here," he continued, "I have seen many a strong man go down under the iron of my will. On whom I would, I had mercy, and I never turned down a brave man. See here friend, I love a good antagonist. I never yet ran from death, nor will I shrink today. I had rather die for the sake of a brave man than anything else on earth, and, sir, you are a brave

man. Why man there is a fortune in that mountain of muscle on your back; man, you have been blind, your bit of mirror never showed you anything but your ugly face; I can see on your back, if you but will it so, gold, silver, houses and lands. What, eating millet and broiling your shins over that fire every day until you tum gray? Give me a chance, sir, and the magistrates will have reason to envy you. Come with me and I will do it. Bali, the Prince of the Road says it, and Bali never broke his word." The robber chief spoke with engaging animation and persuasiveness.

Without replying, the hermit entered his small room and immediately returned with a bundle in his hands and spread it out before his captive. It was a silk jacket and in the center was a pair of delicate hemp sandals.

"It has only been three years, but it seems like an age, since I brought my daughter home on my back. She was as light as a bundle of pine boughs, so light was she that I wearied not on the long, dusty road; a hundred li with Po-bai was but a morning walk. I brought her home," he continued with his eyes on the tiny roll of silk. "For a day she warmed this dark kiln and this salt plain with her sweet presence, but she was a bruised broken flower, and one night I watched her till the tide went out then I carried her across the salt marsh and these ugly hands have kept the mound green and through many a long boisterous night when the cold and wet sought her prison house, the mound was a pillow for my ugly head." He raised his head and looked long at the robber and his face grew stern, and his eyes burned with a relentless purpose.

"When I laid away my wilted flower, I bowed before her grave and I vowed a great vow that I would meet the robber chief somewhere and wipe him off the face of the earth. You talk of making me contented and happy with something to wear and something to eat, you foul vermin, pestilence of innocent homes, make me happy with your purring promises—happy? Yes you have," he continued with the fierce gleam deepening in his eyes. "Love will make a man happy, so will hate. I told you, you were welcome. I have not seen such joy for years. I will treat you as you treat others. Sizzle? In all your miserable life you never labored for your salt and it would not be fitting for you to do more at your death, nor would I receive a benefit from you not even from the fat of your carcass in boiling my brine. It would be more fitting for you to boil in the brine. You must needs groan and howl long and loud many times to atone for the sighs, tears and misery you have brought to others. Yes, there will be long howls of pain to lull my nights of rest; to satisfy my soul of hate you shall boil in that caldron. Listen," he said, turning and thrusting fuel beneath the caldron, "you hear the bubbling, they are demons dancing

in anticipation of your embrace." From the hermit's throat arose a series of explosions that resembled laughter but was not laughter, nor did his face change a muscle. From a corner of the room he picked up a long rope and proceeded to fasten it around the waist of his victim, and threw one end over a cross beam in the roof of the building over the boiling caldron. Horror filled the face of the robber chief. "Friend," said he, "I might ask of you an easier death did I not know you had no mercy. I could prove to you if you but had ears to hear my voice that I was not guilty of the crime against your daughter, nor did I countenance it in members of my band. The knife! man, it has a keen edge, the knife!"

Without replying to these words filled with horror at such a death, the hermit quickly brought two poles as crooked the rafters of the roof. He placed an end of each on the ground and leaned them against the furnace to form a skid up which he intended to pull his victim above the vat. When all was ready he gave the rope a tentative pull which swung Bali parallel with the poles, then, all the diabolical look of his face sprang out in his voice, he laughed a hideous laugh, triumphantly cruel and altogether savage. It came from his deep chest and struggled gurglingly in his throat as if overgrown with hate, too large to get through so small an opening.

"Ha, ha, he, he! the prince of the road will not sizzle but boil; he will boil! "

He seized the end of the rope firmly and placing his feet against the masonry leaned backward, bent his enormous strength to the rope, and Bali slid up the skids toward the boiling pan, and a groan escaped his lips.

"He, he!" the hermit chuckled again, "I may grant him his last request—he may sizzle after he boils. Don't groan, Prince, I will simply dip your feet and warm them up a bit, he, he! then let you in to your knees and take the wrestling tricks out of them, he! he!" Again he bent his strength to the rope.

Martha had been looking at the drama of hate till the horror of it filled her soul and made her faint and helpless. Suddenly recovering herself, and forgetful of her danger, she rushed to the hermit and seized the hands that held the rope. "Stop!" she called, looking up into his face, "Stop, in the name of all that you have loved and lost, for the sake of the memory of your lost daughter, I implore you to stop." She tugged at the huge fingers. "I implore you, do not the crime, do not murder; you saved my life and honor, sully not the noble deed by murder." Again the hermit bent his enormous strength to the rope and Bali reached the top of the skids and below him the brine boiled and tumbled. He waited for the next move, numb with horror.

Martha threw her arms around the mighty hands, and placed her

cheek against them while the tears flowed down over the hands and fingers. "Mercy!" she said, "as you hope for mercy for your soul spare him," she cried. She let go his hands and thrust in an abandon of horror her arms around his neck. "As you love your daughter do it not." The giant bent once more to the rope, then paused and looked down into her face. He stood a moment regarding her, then the rope slipped through his fingers an inch. Martha saw the act with a great throb of hope and loosening her hold ran to the opposite side of the furnace, extended her puny arms and called to the hermit to let go.

Slowly and with great reluctancy the rope slackened and Bali slid down by degrees upon the floor.

The hermit walked around the furnace where stood Martha silently regarding the robber. He sat down and looked Martha over from head to foot in profound astonishment. Martha shrank from his look.

"Ha-a-a!" said he at last, "what interest have you in the man?" and his eyes burned like two coals, "I say what business have you with him?"

"Business with him?" she gasped, "I never saw him till to-day. Ask him. I did not tell you that I was a Christian, sir. Your act was murder and if l had not protested with all my might I would have also been guilty of the greatest of all crimes. Believe me," she urged, her voice and attitude expressing the horror she felt. "God forbids it. He says, 'vengeance is mine and I will repay,' You think that you are administering justice, but it is murder. Give the man over to the law and let it take its course. If the law deals with him, right and good, and if not your hands are justified, and not red with guilt."

"Law?" echoed the hermit with indescribable scorn, "'The thing you would save is outside of law, whom he wills he destroys without mercy. Law" he again repeated with his frightful laugh. '"Law is for the strong—not for the weak, for the protection of magistrates and for such creatures as this. When you meet a snake or centipede you must crush it; or it will strike you."

"But," pleaded Martha, "there is a divine law that knows no favor. and strikes at him who takes revenge with unerring swiftness. It will measure to you both justice," then added, turning quickly to Bali who had been listening with bated breath, "You will not strike or sting when you cross the path of the hermit will you? Vow it now in the name of your ancestors, in the name of all the spirits you fear, you will not seek revenge for your defeat? If he cuts your hands loose will you keep your oath?"

"Swear it?" repeated the voice of the hermit," would such a thing keep an oath?"

"My ancestors," said Bali, "while sacred to memory, would not

add solemnity to an oath of mine. Neither do I fear the spirits, no more do I than I fear man, I fear not death. So there is nothing in life nor death that would make my oath solemn. Yet I give you the word of Bali, the Prince of the road, that I will not seek the hermit to harm him. Bali swears it by his own name, what greater can he find?"

"Atheist," muttered the hermit.

"Yes, atheist," returned Bali," why not so? what religion have you? I rob and you try to kill. Glorious religion is it not? It is the religion of brawn and wit. In that case, sir hermit, your god is greater than mine, at least your muscle is greater though I am inclined to think your wit is not. I take it that your mighty brain hoards but one idea at one time, ugh! you can't measure wit with a block. Your witless tenacity nearly boiled my feet. But come, the oath—will it do? Bali never broke his word."

"But me, me," broke in Martha, "you will never more follow me?"

"I will never again follow you to your harm."

Martha reached for the knife with an appealing look at the hermit. The hermit turned his face to the furnace fire without a sign, as though he had lost interest in the robber. Martha rapidly cut the cords that bound the robber chief and flung the long knife past the hermit into the fire.

Bali arose, stretched his huge legs, and picked up his discarded garment. Martha returned to her baby, who had sat on a bundle of pine boughs against the wall, with silent, open-eyed interest at the scene. Bali stood a moment at the door looking hard at the huge back of his recent antagonist.

"See here," said he, "good devil, or bad devil, the latter you certainly are though you may be something of the former, as the unboiled condition of my legs testify, I verily believe," he added after a pause, "with that knife beyond my reach, if you were to renew our little scrap I would take to my heels, yet never man before saw my back in a fight. Ha! man, where did you get the muscles? Still I think if I had not loosed my hold I would have throttled you. See here devil, good or bad, have you not a word of farewell. At a word from you I might sit down to a glass of wine in spite of your ill nature. My throat feels fearfully dry since a gentle massage massage given it lately by a dear friend of mine. What! no farewell! Well I will struggle not to grieve." He turned from the door and then directly returned and said, "Remember mountain of muscle, that my offer still remains, I did not speak in haste. You carry on your back a gold mine. You know where I live. If you come as a friend, good, if as an enemy, good. The world knows where Bali lives. The Governor and Magistrates know and search the country diligently, and know better than to look through my village for me."

"And you, madam," he added, turning to Martha, "that was a kind word for the sake of a man who was down, but such an act is the nature of women. Yet the act was not without praise as it took courage. Nay, shrink not from me, you have my word. Still, save the privilege of carrying away my legs unboiled, I had rather carry you away than anything else in the world." He looked at the bronzed figure of the hermit and turned away.

## CHAPTER XIII. UNDER THE CARE OF A PROTECTOR.

Martha listened till she heard the Robber Chief splash through the water below the mound. The hermit still bent over his fire motionless as the walls of the furnace, the wearisome bubble, bubble of the brine and the lap, lap, of the tide oppressed her senses, then hunger and exhaustion overcame her and curling up on the pile of brush she was soon lost in sleep by the side of her baby.

The hermit seemed to notice nothing but saw everything. He tip-toed to where she slept and looked long at the pinched suffering face, then hurried away.

Two hours later he brought two small tables of boiled millet and condiments made of cabbage, pepper, turnips and fish. He set them down and walked over to the sleepers and with a loud cough awakened the baby whose cry instantly brought Martha to her feet.

"Come," said the hermit, "your dinner is ready." Martha glanced thankfully into his face and complied immediately with his invitation. They ate their coarse meal in silence and the hermit's lips puckered with pleasure that his guest did not despise his coarse fare. Their meal ended, he set the tables aside, and then picked up Martha's hemp sandals and deliberately poked them into the fire. She looked at the act with startled surprise, then watched him cross the room to his living quarters where stood a huge jar, the top covered with boards. Around the top of the jar was tied a rope, fastened to which was a pair of much worn straw sandals. He untied the string, loosened the sandals and brought them to the fire. The side of one had been worn loose and the straw stood up like a scrub brush. He looked them over attentively, then brought in a handful of rice straw and selecting the longest, he proceeded to bind them into a long string. Martha watched the labor till the sandals were repaired and reduced in size to fit a small foot: then she understood.

"Why," said she, "I can travel barefooted if the hemp sandals are dangerous. You have deprived your barrel of condiments of good luck and have offended the household demons by giving me these sandals."

He looked at her for a moment. "1 understand," said he, "I am not good at talking unless I have had a long time to think it all out. I have done more talking to-day than during many months. My tongue was loose to-day, for hate and thirst for revenge was long upon me. Why I offend the demons for you I know not, but if offended they be, so be it, I fear not them in this matter."

"Did they ever do you any good in all your life?" Martha asked. "On the contrary they have done me much ill. At least they did not prevent ill from befalling me. Still I know not how much more ill they might not have done had I not propitiated them. Whether I offend men or demons I must befriend you, Madam. You and a certain preacher of the new doctrine are the only ones who have spoken kind words to me for many months, perhaps that is the reason."

Tears came into Martha's eyes and she marvelled at the present mood of the strange hermit which contrasted curiously with the furious passion of a few hours previous.

"Tell me," said he, "what is the new faith?"

"Such a long, long story" said she, with a sigh, "I know but little of it. I am a learner. So much to learn is there, one's whole life is not long enough to learn it all, and the span of many generations is too short; yet the strangest part of it all is that a fool may live the doctrine to the salvation of his soul, indeed, it would seem the more ignorant and simple learn it the soonest and best. No, it is not a riddle," she hastily added interpreting his puzzled look. "I see something in your face sometimes when you purse up your lips that fills your ugly face with a glance of sunshine. You are ugly," she added with engaging frankness, "but God made you so but it is only on the outside. He will put the smile on your soul and it will shine forth in great beauty if you but accept Him. The revenge, the hate, the fury, the murder in the heart is a thousand times more ugly than your face could possibly be. They are the work of the devils, and the more you sacrifice to them and fear them, the more ugly will they make your soul."

"Do you mean that the devils are not to be served? that they have nothing to do with our lives?"

"On the contrary, they have much to do with men as I have just said, but they are only found in men's hearts creating crime and wantonness."

"Do you mean that God is good and took delight in making my ugly face and that the devil had nothing to do with it?"

"God gives many graces. I think when Bali hung over the boiling pan he would have given all his personal beauty for five minutes of your

wonderful strength. With what God gave, you are able to protect the weak and helpless. That is the work, perhaps, that he ordained you to do. God rules all our lives. Every act, when we commit it to Him, is for our good. I am fleeing from a terrible danger, driven from my home, yet I know it to be the best thing that could happen to me. I do not ask why, but I know that it is for the best, and I know that it was His providence that sent me to you. O! sir, trust Him, that is all, just trust Him, He will clean the heart of all ugliness."

The hermit had not ceased from his labors while talking, but seemed pressed for time. and worked with speed. Finally, he arose from the inner room, brought out a woman's well-worn jacket and handed it to Martha . She took it and removed her outer jacket and slipped the coarse soiled one on. The hermit picked up the delicate silk garment and committed it to the flames. Martha slipped her feet into the course sandals and rising tried to walk, but her feet were so torn and blistered that she found the task nearly impossible. He stood gazing at her a moment then brought from among the brush, the rack used in carrying the pine from the mountain and placed it before her. Martha understood, nor did she hesitate, but lifting the baby she seated herself on the rack and the hermit proceeded to fasten around the frame the long pine boughs till when be had finished Martha was completely hidden from view.

"Do you think he will follow," Martha asked.

"He, or they will follow,"

"Will they visit you again?"

"He, or they will visit me."

The hermit knelt with his back to the rack, ran his arms through the loops of the frame and rose to his feet, and stepped swiftly out of the door and moved across the plain with long rapid strides.

The great stretch of water had slipped back into the sea leaving the salt plain slippery and soft to the tread. The hermit strode northward over the slimy surface as if it had been the hardest road bed and he free of any load. They had traveled some time without a word, when the hermit said:

"Madam, what is providence?"

"Providence is this," said Martha, with some hesitation, "You were about to murder a man and I was there to prevent it, that was providential; then I was about to be seized and carried off by the robber and was sent to you for protection, that was an act of providence. God used us both to carry out his purpose—those were acts of providence."

"Did you say that I was about to murder?" again asked the voice beneath the load of brush.

"Not only were you about to commit murder, but in your heart you

already committed murder, for before God the purpose is the same in guilt as the act."

"Then, dear madam, I wish I had boiled him, that is if you think l was guilty any way."

"O, O! I beg of you, sir, think not thus, for in doing so you add crime upon crime. No, the sin is not so great as if you had really killed him; and in that case not only would you have added to your crime but you would have hurled the robber into eternity, a lost soul, then would your crime have stared at you through his eyes for all eternity."

"Will God forgive me of my crimes?"

"Most assuredly."

"Will He also forgive Bali of his crimes, and in that case will we both live together in heaven?"

"Yes," was the eager reply.

"Then I will not do it, I will not live in the same place."

"But you would want to live with your daughter."

"Ah, speak not of it, would not a father follow the love of his heart?"

"Then if you loved Bali as you love your daughter would you not want to live with him?"

"But I love him not, I hate him much."

"Ah, sir, you know not of the power of God. If you ask Him to forgive you of your sins, he will take out the hate and implant the love so that you will love. You cannot put the love in the place occupied by hate but He can and He will."

There was a long silence beneath the pine boughs, then the hermit asked: "My daughter was almost as beautiful as you are, Madam, but she knew not that I was ugly; and I was angry whenever a man came to my hut, for .their faces were all better to look upon than mine, and I did not want her to know it." Again he paused, then added, "Do you think that He will make my face wholesome to look at, not beautiful, but just wholesome to look at?"

"The Bible says that we shall be like Him, when we awake in his likeness, and He is gloriously beautiful, Moses once looked upon God and he became so beautiful that men could not look upon him, so he covered his face."

"Then if I look upon Him, all the deformities and ugliness will change to a likeness of Him before I should meet my daughter?"

"Undoubtedly, if you love Him."

A long silence followed while the hermit's shoulders rose and fell, waving the branches in air, keeping time with his long strides. Finally he

spoke:

"Will He really love me even as my daughter loved me?"

"Yes, many times more than your daughter loved you."

The hermit stopped suddenly in his tracks. "More, did you say, love me more than my daughter? My daughter only saw the ugly outside, but you said that my inside was more vicious and ugly than my face, and He sees it all. Does he love such ugly things?"

"Yes, only that He may make them beautiful."

The hermit strode on nor did he ask another question till he finally set down his load and told Martha to climb down. She found herself standing beside the river beneath an overhanging bank with the rays of the setting sun streaming into her face. The hermit disappeared and was gone till the twilight had deepened and the stars came out one by one. Then her companion returned and bade her follow. At first she walked with great difficulty, and it was only by shutting her teeth resolutely that she kept back the cry of pain; soon, however, she could endure her weight, and in fifteen minutes found herself winding out and in among a long line of boats that crowded the river bank. She was glad that it was too dark for any one to be curious regarding the two travelers. Finally her guide paused near a long narrow boat used in transporting brush and other light cargo up and down the river. The hermit carried on a short conversation with the boatman and then motioned Martha to join them. A man met her politely and conducted her over a pile of bags containing grain, to the center of the boat, where was arranged a shelter. She crawled beneath as directed. The dark figure of the hermit stood above her for a moment, then dropped a bundle at her feet with the remark "It is yours." He turned away and faced the head boatman with directions about the journey and said, "Treat her as you fear me," and a gurgling rasping sound followed the command that brought out a long obsequious, "Y-e-a."

For a moment the hermit stood in the dark, facing the she1ter, and finally said:

"Do you think He will make my face tolerable?"

"Assuredly, as there is a God."

"Ah-a-a-a!" he said, and she listened to the sound of his retreating steps.

## CHAPTER XIV A SEARCH

When Mr. Kim came to himself he was lying in the garden behind the house of his enemy. He felt weak and when he tried to sit up his head

swam. He crawled to the corner of the yard where was a spring, and after washing the mud and blood from his face, felt better. He finally got to his feet. He wondered at the silence in the house opposite. Twilight was settling over the town. He again cautiously crawled up to the aperture in the wall where he had· received the blow and listened; he then climbed over the wall and walked around to the front. It was too dark to recognize any one on the streets. A beating of the ironing clubs in a neighbor's house was the only sound that came to him. He cautiously opened the door and examined the room. No one was within. He stepped inside and struck a match; the light showed a room in perfect order as if the owner had just stepped out to return immediately. So impressed was he with the appearance that he brushed his sleeve across his face, wondering if he had been mistaken and the screams that he had heard were only a dream. He went out into the quiet street. A group of young men were in advance of him and he hastened up behind them till their voices were easily heard. They were talking of the events of the day.

"It is right and proper for a man to drive his wife from home if she does not obey him," said one.

"There is a sample," another said, "of what the new religion is doing for us; they make high claims of bringing peace to the earth and good will to men, but as I have seen it it is discord, and bitterness, and the breaking up of homes."

"Where did the woman go?" some one asked.

"No one seemed to know and it was not their business to enquire; of course some one would take up with her and there would be men who would think of her as a prize but it would not do in that town just now to seize her. They would have to wait till they saw whether Mr. Cho would relent and take her back; she has now been taught such a lesson she no doubt will be mighty glad to come back and be obedient.

Mr. Kim passed the company as they turned ta enter an inn and made his way with a heavy heart to the church. For him to make direct enquiries among the townspeople would lay him open to vicious charges, so he visited the women of his congregation and urged them to use every means in their power to find out where Martha had gone. They traveled from house to house with great diligence to make enquiries; and several times during the next day they visited the home of Mr. Cho; but the house was empty, and the neighbors marvelled at his absence. No one but Mr. Kim was able to surmise the cause of his disappearance, and Mr. Kim knew Mr. Cho would soon learn that the man he had felled to the ground was still alive, and be would return as vicious as ever.

On the second day, without informing anyone of his purpose, Mr.

Kim left and followed Martha's footsteps to the town of Riceland. Here he easily found what had occurred the night that Martha had taken refuge in that town; and he took his way to the river where were tied the boats that brought loads from the north. At that point he found no trace of her. No one had ever seen or heard there was such a person as Martha. No woman with a baby on her back had ever in the history of the town made a trip up the river alone. There might have been such a thing, but they did not know of it; they informed him of these facts in a manner that plainly said he had better attend to his own business. Mr. Kim retraced his steps to Riceland and resolved to visit the one man who might know the direction of Martha's flight. The answers to his enquiries gave him much matter for reflection.

Common report had it that this man was a robber, but if you should ask anyone in his town if Bali was a robber you would be informed with great indignation that such was not the case; but that he was a good citizen who was a friend to all; that he had been so slandered for the last ten years, was true, but none but a fool would believe such idle reports.

"If," the people argued, "he were a robber, why did not the magistrate seize him? He had his home among them, and a good one it was, the best house in the town; true he did not work, but what rich man did work? If his trade was really to rob he would be without a home." This argument was sufficient. One's eyes might deceive one, but such logic was irrefutable.

Some were willing at times to admit that Bali's companions were loose fingered and such persons had actually, when smarting under the pain of some loss, started out to complain to the magistrate, but before reaching the Yamen had always thought better of the matter and had returned to grumble in private. It would be unwise to grumble too loudly because some of Bali's friends might hear, and it would be unfriendly to offend one so respected as Bari, and so dangerous. Yes, it would be decidedly dangerous. Then, too, had he not, on occasion, helped different ones, when they had trouble with the magistrate? When that official had become unusually humorous and had tried to entertain the town with the idea that their property was naturally a part of that which belonged to the government, Bali had sometimes interfered. They recalled the philosophy of the magistrate who argued that if the people were true citizens, the government owned them, and all that belonged to them, although in that case, they should be delighted if at any time the government should happen to claim its own; and further, as the magistrate was the administrator for the government, he had the indisputable right to send around and invite any or them to participate in the joyous privilege of

handing over to him what they possessed. Should they, by any means, delay in producing the little items in which the government was interested, which it had, up to the present, denied itself out of love for its good people, why, he, the magistrate, might entertain them at public expense in a small guest room well planked and protected with heavy bars across the windows—a room that he had made for such purposes near his own residence. He was ready to invite such guests before him on occasion and stroke them lovingly with the soft side of a paddle.

Bali had appeared on some of these occasions and politely hinted to the magistrate and, indeed, at times carried on persuasive argument. that the great and parental government could get along with a small fraction of what it had so considerately proposed to take, and, then, too, it would be a good thing, Bali sometimes argued, in as much as the government loves its subjects so much, to bestow a part on the humblest of all citizens, even Bali himself. This had occurred many times, and while Bali seemed to eat the people's lice, yet he had saved their homes.

No one could tell how soon such freaks of humor would again attack the representative of the great country, therefore, the people of Riceland would stand by their unselfish fellow citizen. It was always remembered that Bali had never asked to share the property of a poor man and had always seen to it that the magistrate did not love the poor to the extent of ruining them. No sir, Bali was a good citizen and they were ready to defend that assertion with their lives.

Mr. Kim had no difficulty in finding the house he sought, and was greatly pleased to find the master at home. Bali politely invited Mr. Kim to enter his guest room. It was much in contrast with the ordinary home. The walls were papered in immaculate while oiled paper covered the floor and had been polished till it shone like a mirror; paintings adorned the walls and the doors; rich silk cushions were laid about the floor; a beautiful charcoal brazier stood ready for the convenience of the long pipes of guests.

When Mr. Kim took his seat, the two men looked each other over and entertained the same thought that they had never looked upon so fine a specimen of manhood. There was mutual respect in the observation. After the formal introduction Mr. Kim presented the purpose of his visit.

"I have lost a friend," said he. "That friend is a woman. I have traced her to this point but beyond here I can find nothing definite regarding her. It occurred to me that you may have heard something of her whereabouts. I am told that to suspect you of knowing most secrets is not vain flattery. I have learned that the woman fled from this town at night, but to trace her flight baffles all my efforts."

Bali looked into the face of his visitor and a smile played about his bold face. "You will pardon me friend," he said, "but it seems curious to see a man frankly confess that he is hunting a woman, one who is described simply as a friend. You are sure you are not husband, brother, or relative of some sort?"

"There was a time when I would have been as greatly mystified as you are," replied Mr. Kim. "Some years ago I became a Christian and I am now a teacher of that religion. This woman was one of my pupils and I am searching for her, as I am morally responsible for her. Even though I had not better reason, I should act as I am doing from the knowledge that harm to her would recoil heavily upon me."

"It is a curious religion,' said Bali musingly, "to send its devotees out searching for runaway women. Her relatives should do that, it seems to me, according to all the laws of the ancients. I myself have thought a good deal on the question of religion," he continued pensively. "I have visited nearly all the important shrines and monasteries in the country, and I did not see but that the best of the devotees were just about like the rest of us; men who love the things that I love and obtain them by the same principle. Why should we expect any thing more of a religion from the West, which is younger than the cults of the East, and, in the nature of the case, less experienced with the weakness of man?"

"Perhaps I can easiest explain my position in the matter," said Mr. Kim, "by telling you all about the cause of this woman's flight," and he told the outlaw how Martha had become a Christian and her husband had threatened her with death, and how in the face of all commands she persisted in her faith, even in spite of beatings, cruel and relentless. During the recital Bali's eyes sparkled with interest.

"Good," he said, "that was good. No coward, eh? good! that was good."

Mr. Kim looked at his host in surprise but continued:

" At last Martha came to me and begged me to let her know what she should do. I told her to obey God rather than man and let Him take care of the results . She did, and now she is a helpless wanderer, in prey to any brute who would roam these streets to devour the innocent and helpless," and he looked sternly into the face of Bali.

"That is good," repeated the robber, "that was a good story. Fearless woman, I hope that she will have many children and they will take after their mother. If your religion could make all people brave as that I think I would endorse it; it might be a good thing for magistrates and for a few others I know. But see here, friend," he continued, half closing his eyelids and looking into the face of Mr. Kim, "I am a man of leisure and

plenty, but I have seen many a wild game in my day, yes, many a wild frolic, and I have met many men who have placed themselves uncomfortably in my path and they have uniformly become very sorry for doing so. The fact is, and I am sure you will pardon me for saying it, I don't like the way you look at me. If you mean to infer that I have had any thing to do in causing this admirable young lady to run from her rightful husband you have badly blundered. But even though I had intended to appropriate a pair of dainty sandals I would not expect people to look at me so proudly."

Mr. Kim looked his host over from head to foot in utter amazement.

"I did not intend to offend you," said he with quiet dignity. "l can boast of injury to no man as far as I remember, that is, in an overt act. At the present lime, my faith requires that I suffer much rather than retaliate. Our creeds are quite different, still I have seen a bit of men and the world and I have noticed that the innocent and the really brave take offence slowly. They may injure another in self defence, but I have never seen a brave man the aggressor."

"Well spoken, well spoken, you bowled me over there, that is right, the brave are generous.".

"Then I understand," said Mr. Kim preparing to leave, "that you know nothing regarding this woman?"

"Who said I know nothing about her?" and he laid great emphasis on the word nothing. "Very little transpires here of which I don't know something. Dear me, let me think. You say she was a woman rather young than otherwise, or did you say old? Young? young then, and you said she had a baby on her back? Let me see! ah, yes, traveling towards the river. It must have been she if my memory serves me right. She was taking shelter under the roof of the most fiendish looking man on the face of the earth. Tell you what," and he leaned his face toward Mr. Kim, "I never believed in demons until I came in contact with that creature."

"The man who lives out on the sail marsh!" said Mr. Kim. "Even the same. Seen him have you? Well, beware, for if you stir up his wrath he will boil you in his salt pan."

Bali threw back his head and laughed uproariously. "I have met only one man and one woman who were not cowards and they were under that roof." He laughed again and rubbed his hands together in evident pleasure. "But beware that you don't stir up the devil, I say beware. Don't tell him that you are after that woman, if you do"—here he laughed again. "I would like to be there to see it. Tell you what! he is the only man who ever put Bali on his back, and I am so well pleasured that I have a

comfortable place for him any time he will come and live with me," and the outlaw again broke into a loud laugh.

"Cowards," repeated Mr. Kim slowly. "It seems to me that I have heard the term applied to our people by foreigners, but I don't think I have ever before heard 'a countryman of mine unwittingly or otherwise do us so great a wrong. Friend, I think you must have walked the world blind if you have not seen more than two persons whom you could call brave."

"Cowards!" exclaimed Bali, "cowards indeed, they are cringing and fawning at the feet or the officials who rob and destroy them as if they were so many rabbits in the bush to be trapped. What are they if they are not cowards?"

"You have used the wrong term," replied Mr. Kim "It is a moral habit of nine tenths of our people to so thoroughly believe in the paternal character of our government, and the duty of every one to devote all to it, that when the people are robbed they regard it as they would measles, unpleasant but necessary. Sometimes they protest, yet there is no one ready to take the matter up seriously because they all have a feeling that what the parent demands the son should give though it is hard and the son may have to go' hungry to do so. Our people are what the Eastern world has lauded for thousands of years, that means, that more than one half of the people of the world thinks praiseworthy, what you now condemn as cowardice. If a man has a moral conviction down in the elementary part of his nature, that clinging to his property is unholy selfishness, he will not fight hard for his ox when in danger of losing it."

"Well, this moral habit, that you call it," replied Bali, "is the most disgusting habit I know. There may be some semblance of truth in your wording of the matter, but you certainly cannot say that it holds true with the officials. For instance, the magistrate in the adjoining town has an unpardonable habit of failing to keep his agreements. If you don't know him yet, you probably will for he hates Christians. On a certain occasion he agreed with me that there were only certain ones in the county who were justly open to punishment for oppression of their neighbors, certain ones you know, who have become rich by squeezing the poor. I consented to point out means of relieving some of these oppressors of their ill-gotten gains, provided he would consider inviolate the property of others, they being poor and inoffensive, but his memory was evidently poor for he must forsooth seize them also. I had not visited his excellency for some time but on the next day after the seizure I did so. The fat cheeked leech was sitting on his silk cushion examining a man preparatory to using the paddle. I simply walked into the yard and pretended to be interested in the beautiful architecture of some of his rotten, tumbled-down buildings and

when he arose to greet me I did not see him at all. I was deep in the problem of how many years it would take for a post to tumble down after it had rotted half way through, provided the annual rain falls lifted the great East River to a height sufficient to moisten them, passed in front of him without seeing him and when a servant, not well acquainted with me questioned my presence, I patted him on the cheek gently and he rolled in the dust, presumably to do me honor. At the moment I was simply interested in the end of an old rafter where the ants were .busy with its rotten splinters, and after a few more observations of the architectural grandeur of the place I withdrew. The paddle was not used, and I had a present that afternoon of a bunch of chickens and several strings of eggs. Coward? On your own principle that a brave man is generous he was a coward to rob the helpless man and he was a coward to be overawed by such a man as I. I hear that he has been repeating something of the sort lately. I shall visit him some night, and will rub his pipe stem between his teeth till his appetite for metal shall have been satiated."

Bali looked into the face of Mr. Kim and smiled at the amazement he saw there.

"Why, you wonder at my frankness? I am trying to prove to you that the people are cowards, from the officials down. They all know where I live and that it is my business to rob. Go out now in this town and see if you can get a man to say that Bali is not a law abiding citizen? I wage no warfare on the poor, but those who have ill-gotten gains I sometimes visit, and through me the magistrate visits them too, nor could you persuade that official that I was other than his greatest friend, and a good citizen. Now what say you? Are they not cowards?"

"I did not say," replied Mr. Kim, as soon as he could recover from his astonishment, "that we did not have cowards among us. I know they are found among all peoples, and I will not deny that your magistrate is one of them, or that you can not find many among his class. The bully is as a rule a coward," and he again turned his eyes sternly upon Bali, "and the real coward is the man who will oppress the weak and defenceless. Some day," he added, not permitting Bali to speak, "you will see that our people have a courage equal to any people on the face of the earth, a courage created from their consciousness of what is their moral right."

"Ah! I see," Bali replied "that is your purpose is it to create an opposition to the present order of things, a revolution? I did not know that. I thank yon for being as frank to me as I have been to you. Indeed, you almost inspire my respect."

"Under your own confessions," said Mr. Kim, "you have committed many mistaken. deeds, but you never conceived an idea more

false than that. With us there is no idea of violence, and we are as far from political intentions as the west is from the east. We teach men how they may have God in their lives to the extent that, if they purpose to do the right they find it a moral impossibility to do the wrong. We teach them that violence or revenge against an enemy or the wicked is a crime equal to that against the innocent; that love is the first law of living; and that hatred of another is also no less a crime than murder; that man must hate sin with intense hatred; that man must have a passion for good. We teach that your sins may not only be forgiven but that you may have a consciousness they are so forgiven, and that God dwells within you."

During these brief remarks Bali's face turned from anger to amusement, then to a serious study of Mr. Kim's face, but he made no reply and Mr. Kim continued looking steadily back at Bali, "Our people will not flinch; they will give their lives for their faith."

Mr. Kim arose to go and Bali arose with him.

"Success to you in the search for the maiden. Your greatest friend is the man who bids you beware of that fiend," and Bali laughed again.

The next day, Mr. Kim departed for the home of the hermit out on the salt marsh. A storm was brewing and when he looked out on the marsh late in the afternoon the cold September rain was falling and the marsh was slimy to the step and dismal to the eye. Mr. Kim waded through mud and water half to his knees, while crabs on the higher elevations would leer up at him, then scurry from his approach in every direction. He found the hermit bending over the fire in his old place. When Mr. Kim entered the salt kiln the hermit was looking down into the fire, his face close to the mirror. Mr. Kim paused on entering that his eyes might become used to the semi-darkness: when he spoke to the hermit, the latter arose slowly and gave no hint that he recognized his visitor.

Mr. Kim addressed him politely and at the same time his eye traveled over the place, the while wondering if Martha could indeed have taken refuge in so forbidding a place. The hermit eyed him narrowly out of the comer of his eyes while he again bent over his task. Mr. Kim felt embarrassed. His parting with the hermit had been one of mutual good feeling, and after a scene of the most pathetic demonstration on the hermit's part; but now the man had received him coldly if not with aversion. Mr. Kim stood some moments waiting for the hermit to speak, but receiving no word from him, he walked further within the building and examined the process of making salt with interest, as it was the first time he had ever been in a salt kiln. All the time he was aware of the eyes of that strange creature upon him. The ugly shape and the ugly face seemed to be everywhere. When he went back of the great furnace, the

face was bending over a bundle of brush at the side of the building and the eyes seemed to be observing him. When in his wanderings and inspections he arrived on the opposite side, there stood the hermit at work with a rope braiding up the frayed ends, but the corner of his eyes were still on him. Mr. Kim was not given to being nervous but he felt decidedly uncomfortable. Whenever he attempted to approach and speak the hermit would turn to some duty and make communication impossible. Mr. Kim felt that he was wasting precious time and cornered the hermit in front of his furnace and as that gentleman reached for pine boughs for the furnace he stepped in front of him.

The hermit slowly looked Mr. Kim over and a scowl darkened his ugly face and there was a gurgling down in his huge chest:

"What do you want of her?" he demanded. The words came in a deep rumble but Mr. Kim looking at his lips could not tell whether they had moved or not.

"You have guessed right, friend, I have been trying to make enquiries of you since I came but you seemed determined not to speak. I am exceedingly anxious to learn something of the woman who fled with her baby and was seen here two days ago."

"Who told you?" the hermit growled.

"Bali, the robber," replied Mr. Kim.

The hermit lifted his chin and gazed steadily at Mr. Kim.

"What have you to do with Bali, and what business have you with the woman?" The words came in puffs of breath, and insistency that held menace in them and would brook no equivocation.

Mr. Kim thought of the parting words of the robber and wondered if he had found the home of a madman, and for a moment he stood looking into the horrid face of the man confronting him while in the silence, the murmur of the boiling pan rumbled around the building as if it were un echo of the hermit's voice.

"I will answer your second question first," replied Mr. Kim with slow deliberation. "To do so will be a long story and unless you object we will sit down on some of this brush," and he pushed a bundle near the furnace, and the hermit again bent before the fire three feet away absorbed in keeping the furnace hot as though it were the one passion of his life. Mr. Kim told all he knew of Martha and how acting on his advice she had committed herself to a course that had hurled her into danger. When he had finished the tale, he turned to the hermit and asked, "Would it not be less than human did I not seek her to protect her, and strive to reconcile her husband to her?"

"Bali," rumbled the hermit.

"Bali? I saw him last night for the first time and he directed me here."

For along time the hermit made no remark, but persistently fed the brush into the furnace, oblivious of the man at his side.

"She is in heaven?" said the hermit questioningly.

"In heaven!" exclaimed Mr. Kim in alarm, "what do you mean, sir? Where is she? What has happened?"

The hermit moved impatiently and extended his long arms through the door of his salt kiln into the beating rain, towards the outline of trees in the distance.

"O, I humbly crave your pardon," said Mr. Kim, "I was overwrought regarding Martha's safety and for the moment thought only of her.- As for your daughter, I have not the least doubt that she is safely housed with God."

"And she is not out there?" he added pointing through the door.

"You," said Mr.. Kim, "do not carry your house around with you. When you leave this salt kiln you are quite free from it, so when your daughter left the house of flesh, she was quite free from it and now is as the angels of God—free to think, to love, to feel, and act, as it was impossible for her to do while with you."

The hermit knelt down and looked up into Mr. Kim's face and asked:

"Does she still think of me and love me? You say she is gloriously beautiful and knows more than when she was with me: she did not know that my face was ugly: does she know it now? and and will she love me just the same?" There was a fierce urgency in the hermit's voice.

"All who enter God's kingdom know nothing but love, and the soul of your daughter's father would to her be the most lovely of all on earth. But there is something of which you have not thought," added Mr. Kim, "are you sure that you will go to her?" The hermit looked up quickly to see if Mr. Kim was mocking him, but encountering the grave look replied: "I know not, sir, I know not."

"No man with sin on his soul can enter the kingdom of heaven," said Mr. Kim.

"She is there, she is there," replied the hermit, with assurance in his voice, "she didn't have sin on her soul, I know that," and he looked up into Mr. Kim's face with a fierce glance as if he challenged a denial.

"To have a sinless soul is far easier than carrying with you one blackened with sin. 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' "

"Believe?" said the strange man, "what is that?"

Mr. Kim took from his pocket a small Testament and placed it in the hermit's hands, and turning down many leaves told him to read and learn.

"I will leave it with you for a while and then I will come and ask it of you again for I need it and many others. need it."

The hermit arose and laid the book on the wall of the furnace and looked out into the dark: the wind had risen while they talked and was blowing a furious gale across the marsh. He led Mr. Kim into a small room well sheltered from the cold and bade him make himself comfortable: he would leave but they would meet when the storm ceased. He looked up at the expectant face of Kim and said, "Martha is not here nor can you follow."

"This is fierce, terrible weather," said Mr. Kim, "and the tide will soon be up," and he followed the hermit to the door. "If you have urgent duties to take you hence let me share them. Toil has been my lot and always will be. Let me share your task tonight.."

The hermit paused and looked Mr. Kim over as if he had seen him for the first time.

"It is a cold wet night," said he, "and her head will be uneasy; for me to be sheltered is not good while she is out there. She will feel better if my ugly head lies close to hers," and he stepped through the door with a quick motion that was in strange contrast to his usual great deliberation of speech and manner.

Mr. Kim turned to the furnace and sitting down before the fire added, now and then, a pine branch lo the blaze and watched them curl up and blacken, then burst into a fierce flame. The storm blew furiously without and beat the rain in under the eaves where the roof had been raised for ventilation, and beat its way across the kiln like a fog and dampened his clothing. He lay down near the fire on the pine boughs and thought of all his strange host had said and wondered much why he had withheld information regarding Martha. Was it because he was suspicious still? Or did he know that any added knowledge could aid nothing in securing her protection? Or was he so deeply swallowed up in the memory of his daughter and having so long nothing else upon which his mind could feed he had no place for other thoughts? Mr. Kim vexed his mind with the matter till at last the beating of the rain and the low murmur of the salt pan lulled him to sleep.

When he awoke light was shining in the door and the storm had ceased; at his feet stood his host pushing the pine into the furnace as if he had never stirred from the spot.

## CHAPTER XV. CHARACTER BUILDING.

News of threatening trouble at the Magistracy filled Mr. Kim with the gravest apprehension. Messages urging him to return arrived every day, so with great reluctance he suspended his search for Martha and returned to Justice to brave in his own person the fierce tide of opposition against the faith. In the stirring scenes that now took place Martha and her peril were almost forgotten.

Grandmother Pagoda had been lingering on the outskirts of the town many hours expecting Mr. Kim and was the first to greet him on his arrival.

This lady deserves our closer acquaintance. She was sometimes called "the widow." Of course she had never possessed a name and everyone had long since forgotten the name of her husband, furthermore, as he died thirty years ago, few persons really knew that she had possessed a husband. Of course it was unnatural to suppose that any woman

could have lived without having had a husband some time in her life, that is, if she were a respectable woman, and this woman was certainly respectable; without the necessity, therefore, of raking up the history of the town for proof it was assumed that she had had a husband. Some added the term 'old' to her name. She did not object to that for in truth she was old and beside it was a compliment to be called old; the spirits had blessed her, and honored her greatly by permitting her to look back in memory upon two generations, and the word old pleased her. She was so old that it was no disgrace for her to be seen in the company of men. From this freedom she had experienced a pleasure in her latter years that she had not dreamed of during her earlier life. Now if any of her male friends visited her home, no one stirred up a row in the neighborhood under the virtuous plea of defending a widow, nor was there any danger of anyone appearing at night to carry her off. During the time of her early widowhood a powerful relative had stood between her and the amorous young men of the community who were not able to bear the expense of a wedding, with the result that she escaped a forced marriage, and choosing to make no marital alliance she had been greatly blessed in her freedom, "yea," she would say, "greatly blessed."

Her relatives were now all gone, nor did she need their protection. Her age protected her from the greatest of ills of unprotected womanhood, and her arms were strong enough to do washings and sewing for her neighbors, enough to keep her in a limited amount of cash. She also

possessed two tiny rice fields. What more should any woman want? Sickness? Well, she was sure it would not be a long hardship, because old people never are sick long. It would be a day or two of pain, then the yellow valley, what mattered. Now, added to all these advantages that she had enjoyed above most women, there had come this great and glorious change. It was dated from the hour when the preacher had come to the town and cried over his sins; the whole world had changed, she saw it everywhere, and there was a song in her heart and on her lips. The neighbors were astonished to hear her humming curious songs from morning till night.

She was so happy in her new faith. that she ran from house to house telling every one she met that it was good. Her earnestness was irresistible. Some people thought her crazy and told her so, but it did not offend her. She would reply that she was glad to be crazy if it made her good and filled her with such joy. "Why" she would say "there were in ancient times more than one hundred people who all went crazy at one time, and they were so happy that, in one day, three thousand joined them and became crazy also."

A small company of men and women of middle life joined her in the Sabbath worship and they purchased a hut which was twelve by sixteen feet, and there they gathered from day to day.

Grandmother Pagoda led Mr. Kim into the new chapel and he was delighted. On inquiry he found there was no one of the old organization who attended this class, but, on the contrary some of them were bent on destroying the little company of believers. They inspired the rowdies of the neighborhood to commit many acts of violence. Among these active persons was the former leader. His ambition to reform the government had come to naught. His followers had deserted him and he had again been called into the presence of the magistrate and threatened with direst punishment, if he did not quiet down and leave the affairs of the people to the magistrate; as a result, he was exceedingly bitter against Mr. Kim and made many sinister threats.

Mr. Kim called the members of the group together for examination. It was no easy task. Their daily lives must be reviewed in great detail. Did they experience the presence of the new life, or was the change merely on the surface? Had they given up all their old practices of demon worship and fear of demons! What had been their attendance of the means of grace? Did they study the Word? Did they contribute regularly for the support of the Gospel? These and many other questions were asked before Mr. Kim received any on probation.

He began the examination with the male members of the group

while the women waited in trepidation for their turn. At last Grandmother Pagoda took her place on the mat before her pastor. She was humble, she protested her unworthiness and thought she really ought to be submitted to another term of waiting; however, she would do her best to answer his questions. Yes, she had learned to read and could repeat all the questions of the Church catechism and answer them from memory, but, she added, "what is that? anyone could do that even though one were not a Christian." Sin? why she hated sin, and knew that she had obtained pardon from sin, and—happy? Ah-yes, very happy.

"How about persecutions?" asked Mr. Kim, "do you gladly submit to them knowing that they will work in you a better experience if you receive them patiently?"

Grandmother Padoga sat for a long time with her eyes fixed on the mat and picking up the hem of her garment fumbled at the corner as if in the act of sewing. Her body swayed back and forth suggestive of deep concern. Several times her eyelids moved as if struggling to lift them to Mr. Kim's face, finally, raising her face, she looked steadily into his eyes and said,

"The question never came to me just in that way. I was trying to find out how my heart stood in the matter. If I tell you all about it you will know how to judge; and then please tell me what I must do. From the beginning of our organization there have been people in the neighborhood who have done everything in their power to make our lives unhappy. They seem to have had no objection to the other organization, but as soon as we wanted nothing to do with political affairs, nor anything else except salvation from sin, this class of people seemed filled with bitter malice and have lost no opportunity to persecute us and have many times threatened our lives. Why they should have special malice toward me I cannot imagine, but so it is. It would seem that the better our hearts get the more they would do us harm. When the other group disbanded the members were more bitter than the unbelievers, and united with them to harm us. It has been many years since I have heard an insulting remark addressed to me; why, sir, there is not a man or woman in the neighborhood whom l have not seen grow up from childhood, some I have fed at my door and I have attended nearly all through fevers and the small pox. They have gratefully called me Grandmother all these years. Now these children of mine have turned against me. Even the little ones on the street hoot at me when I pass, they dodge out from behind corners and dark alleys to gibe at me, not because I have grown ill-natured toward them, for on the contrary, I have never loved them as I have since I knew Him. Yesterday I picked up a little child in my arms and repeated again

that I loved him, and wanted him to know that I loved him so much that I cried till his little jacket was wet with my tears and .his bright eyes grew moist too, but when I put him down he joined his companions and turned on me with hoots and gibes. Some years ago I took a young girl into my home an cared for her. She was a widow and in danger of being seized by some lewd fellows and sold for a wife. I obtained aid and protected her and fed her many months, till she again married one of her own choice. She lives across the street from my house, but treats me with disdain. Some of my neighbors have many times threatened to pull my house down if I did no give up my faith, 'they would stamp on me and destroy me' they said.

"Two weeks ago to-day I was on the point of leaving home for our little chapel, when a company of these young men appeared in my compound, they broke into my kitchen and with sticks and stones destroyed all my furniture and crockery. Then they came to my front door and pulled it from its hinges, broke it into splinters and threw them about the yard, so did they also with all the doors and windows of my house. I thought they would have respect for my gray head, but they seized me by the hair and dragged me into the yard, some one beat me with a heavy stick while they continued to drag me about the compound. Finally they set me down on a stone and gathered around me in a circle and called me all the vile names they could lay their tongues to. I tried to speak when they again seized me; for a moment there was great confusion, and suddenly I knew nothing. When I came to myself I was lying here on the chapel floor. Some of the Christians had found me and brought me here." She ceased speaking and raising the gray locks from her forehead she showed Mr. Kim a deep scar that had scarcely healed, "Here," she added, "here is where they struck me." For a moment she folded her hands and her eyes sought the mat, then she added, "Still, I hardly know why I am glad, yet I am glad, there is a great peace within." Tears stood out on her cheeks and she looked up with her hands clasped and raised to her chin. "Why, yes," she said, "He gave His life for me and I am ready to give my life to Him for a testimony. Deny Him? no! no! I have just begun to live, there is youth in my soul. This old wrinkled body is almost worn out, these arms are withered, and my hands tremble and my legs are unsteady. A few days and this body be thrown aside as an old worn out garment. They can bruise it, they may destroy it, but I will be true to Him." She again paused and dropped her eyes to the floor, then continued, "I said a moment ago that you would know what I must do, and would be able to tell me, but I know myself, I shall always love Him and obey Him," she again paused and all sat in a tense silence observing her face. Presently

she added, "I think 1 may not be fit to be received into the Church yet. I am only a beginner and there are many things I do not know, and as for being good; years ago I thought I was good and the people with whom I associated called me good, and pointed me out as a pattern for others, but since I have learned of Him, I could think nothing so foolish."

Mr. Kim's eyes filled with tears. "Would that I had a testimony of equal fidelity," said he. At that moment, as if to answer the wish the malicious face of Mr. Cho appeared at the open door.

The little chapel opened on the main street. So much a part of the street did it seem that pedestrians frequently entered for a moment's rest, and to take shelter from the sun, dust or rain. On Sabbath days coolies with loads on their backs would saunter in and stand gazing at the congregation till some impulse moved them on. All day long a murmur of voices echoed about the door; there would be a shuffling of sandals, a pause, a burst of surprised inquiry at the sight of the worshipers and then the receding sound of sandaled feet. All classes of people darkened the door, soldiers, yamen runners, the idle, the curious, and all alike wondered at the strange practice of the Christians who never paused for an instant for salutations or friendly greetings while engaged in their worship..

Mr. Cho stood a moment at the door, the bridle rein of his donkey over his arm. His look of malice caused Mr. Kim to start, and as the man walked away he felt a sense of impending danger. The feeling filled his exhortation with profound solicitude for his people.

It was reported that night, that Mr. Cho held a long conference with the leader of the disbanded group, behind closed doors, and at the conclusion of the conference both men seemed filled with delight.

The next day there were many magistrate's servants about the town and several made it their business to visit the little chapel. It was not a good sign, and some of the recent followers of the new faith found business elsewhere very pressing and left town. The consternation inspired in others did not change Mr. Kim's plans. Danger and uncertainty were too long associates of his to cause him to be perturbed at these signs of trouble.

One of the magistrate's runners made sharp inquiries as to what the Christians did. He was bold to address all the Christians in turn on the subject and finally sat through the greater part of an afternoon service listening to all that was said, and when it was over, he turned to someone and asked why Christians did not sing as the Koreans had always known so well how to sing, why introduce this new noise, was it not an insult to their ancestors to introduce such innovations into the life of Koreans? Grandmother Pagoda took the matter up.

"Now, see here, friend," said she, "I have known you all your life; I fed your father for months when he was beaten by the magistrate many years ago; I nursed him to health because there was no one else who dared to do so, but I was glad in the service. I carried you on my back many, many times for your mother while she went out to her daily washing. You called me grandmother all your life, I know every beat of your heart and every breath you draw. You were kind at one time and polite. Then you engaged in the service of the magistrate and made it your business to arrest men and watch them while they were beaten, and you fatted on the people's miseries. I know why you have come here," she said slowly and with conviction, "you want to see if it will be to your advantage to injure us. Now, how much do you think you can get out of the poor old widow, your grandmother?"

"What nonsense, old woman?" he said. "Have I threatened you? I only asked why you do not use the ancient tunes and songs, why you introduce these things from the barbaric West? Are not Korean institutions good enough that you should torment our ears with this strange noise? Your noise reaches the magistrate and disturbs the quiet of his excellency's hours. That is all that I was saying. I know you were good to my parents and to me years ago. Did I speak to the contrary? My gratitude is double when I think of our past friendship, for in those good old days you did not draw attention lo your acts of kindness. I had hoped that your new faith had not destroyed the broad charity for which you have so long been renowned. Your hasty judgment grieves me. Supposing I have not visited you for a long time, does that argue that I did not come to-day to pay you my respects? And while I am doing so if I have taken occasion to make some inquiries intended to convey a delicate hint that it would be good not to conduct your affairs so as to annoy his excellency, why should you complain? Slow would I be to pose as your teacher, yet if, as the preacher has just said, you are trying to harmonize your life with the golden rule, and I told you bow to make his excellency happy have I not helped you in your doctrine and proven to your that I am you best friend But if - ..."

"Go on, go on," said Grandmother Pagoda, "if what?"

He cleared his throat and assumed his blandest tone and in his voice was a note that reminded one of Mr. Kim when he preached.

"I have my duties that often extend beyond my inclinations," here he touched the tips of his fingers together and held them there, "Duty, you know, is sacred to us who try to fill these responsible positions. You Christians know what I mean. Mr. Kim here, has treated the question just now better than I could. The irresponsible herd do not understand. For

instance, I am sent out to arrest someone who is a law breaker. I must of course strive my uttermost to do so. There are sometimes mistakes made, how can poor human judgment always determine the false from the true, or, in other words, how can I know who are telling the truth and who are trying to deceive? I do my duty and sometimes the people complain. If, on occasion, there are innocent gray heads that suffer, and wives and babies who go hungry, it is just a vindication of the law. The good of the law is the best for all the people, which means that it is good also for those who suffer innocently, though at the time it .may not so appear to their dull minds. Now these are our duties grandmother. and however much one may deplore suffering inflicted upon those one loves, it is a matter of duty from which one must not flinch." The young man sighed and looked virtuous.

"You," replied the lady. "were always a shrewd lad, making white black and black white for the sake of your ends. Suppose a slip of justice put you under the paddle, I presume you would be grateful for the vindication of the law. There is a passage of Scripture that fits your case exactly. You will notice if you have ever read the Scriptures, but of course you haven't; everything is called by its right name. If a man deceives he is called a liar; if he takes that which does not belong to him he is called a thief and robber; he who causes another man's death is called a murderer. If he covers up his deeds on the pretense that he is doing his duty he is called a hypocrite. 'Woe unto you hypocrites who devour widow's houses.' That you had gone far wrong I know. But that you were either so far self deceived by your greed, or so villainously wrong as to make gain out of a friend and the innocent under the sophistry of duty I did not dream. Lad, it is amazing that one so young has gone so far. Tell me, Chang Ding-i," she looked into his eyes and shook her gray locks at him, "tell me your heart does not follow your lips."

"Ah-a-a!" exclaimed the young man and looked again at the tears on the face of the old woman, and at the faces of those surrounding· him, 'what mummery is this?" and he springing to his feet flung himself into the street

A few minutes later Mr. Kim motioned to Grandmother Pagoda and they engaged in close conference.

"What shall we do?" the Christians asked when the dangers had been explained.

"Why just what Christians have done in all ages—receive what God permits," said Mr. Kim.

## CHAPTER XVI THEY WHO KNOW NO FEAR,

The Christians had not long to wait before finding sound reasons for their apprehensions. Late the next afternoon a dozen of the magistrate's servants appeared in the Christian community and led the whole band to the magistrate.

"You are wanted," said a rough man to the widow. "Move, now, the magistrate has called for you." She was sitting on a mat in the farther part of her front room reading her red covered Bible.

"Why, yes," said she, without surprise, "certainly I shall be happy to wait upon his Excellency. I did not know that he was pleased to see me." She arose and slipped the Bible in a case made of a long piece of cloth and then bound it around her waist. "I am quite ready now if you will lead the way."

He replied with a gruff "come along" using the low language. "High time," said he, "for you Christians to learn that you can't deny your ancestors, deceive the ignorant, rail at old customs, without being made to suffer for it. Move now, or I will tie your hands."

The threat was made evidently from force of habit; as the lady was walking rapidly at his side without faltering. As they passed the chapel, Mr. Kim was led out with his hands tied behind him. He glanced at her with a smile of recognition as his conductor ordered him to follow at her heels. His heart stirred as he noticed her light, almost youthful step. Then, he remembered her testimony at the examination and rebuked his own misgivings. Soon the man leading the woman placed. her in the charge of Mr. Kim's captor and started down another street. "I have another one of these Christian dogs down here that I must flog into line," he said.

Mr. Kim stepped abreast of Grandmother Pagoda and they were led toward the yamen. "Do you know how to start it? Let me see," said she, "I don't remember just how it goes," and she hummed beneath her breath 'If on a quiet sea?' "Oh, yes, I have it now. Shall we sing it, Mr. Kim? My heart is full and it seems that I must sing, but, if you think I had better not, just say so," and without waiting for a reply she chanted the chorus.

When they arrived at the yamen nearly the whole group of Christians were there under guard, and soon the absent ones were brought in. They appeared with scared, white faces, some with Asiatic imperturbability, and others with the triumphant glad looks of the persecuted. They were ordered into the presence of the magistrate, He was seated on a high platform that formed a part of the magistrate's office quarters. The platform would have been an ordinary room if it had been

enclosed, but three sides had been left open and instead of the ordinary stone and mud floors with their flues it was made of wood and an open space could be seen beneath. The prisoners were ordered to kneel in a row in the open yard, before the official, some six feet below him, and at a distance from his elevated seat. The fat magistrate sat in silence looking at his prisoners tor some time, He counted them, there were fifteen; then he turned and talked in an undertone to his secretary, evidently discussing the character, and the financial condition of each prisoner. He had never arrested a company of Christians before, and it was only a few months ago when be had been overawed by some who represented themselves as members of that sect. He would, therefore, proceed with caution; if he should let fell his blow, it must fall where it would do himself no harm and tell most for his exchequer, and, at the same time, make a final disposal of the hated question of Christianity among those under his· jurisdiction.

"That big fellow at the end of the line, the one like an ox, who is he?"

"He," replied the secretary, "is called Kim, the preacher, from Rocky Ridge."

"Kim," was the surprised reply, "l thought that he had left, he called on me, or rather I sent for him some time ago; he seemed a decent kind of a chap, that is for a Christian. Is he connected with the foreigner in any way?"

"I think, your Excellency, he is.in their service; at least, so I have been informed."

"l would it were not so," said the wily magistrate, "I crave not a mix up with them, they would be no pleasanter than a mix up with Bali, the robber. Think you he has money?",

"I know not, it is said that the foreigner's pockets are well lined and if they care enough for their employees to see them safe in life and limb they may make it well to your advantage to deal with him. His body is big and would stand the paddle well."

"We shall see, we shall see. His .hands are tied, that is well" observed the magistrate. "Now who is that chap in the center of the line, the one who seems to be shaking as if with cold; who is he?"

"He? Why, he is a farmer. They say he has just begun the new faith."

"Ha! I fear he will shake all his faith out of him, and if it sticks too closely to his ribs perhaps we can assist in loosening it."

The secretary laughed, and others who had pressed up to listen joined in.

"Now, what is that, who is it that is making that noise?"

"Why that is Grandmother Pagoda, you know Grandmother Pagoda? Every one knows her. She is the one next to the Preacher, Kim. She is singing. You can't stop her mouth, she will sing at all hazards."

"What!" said the magistrate, "singing 'Happy Day.' Sure it must be delightful to wait for a paddling. What, is she crazy? How old is she?"

"Old?" re plied the secretary, "She is as old as the hills. You see, she is called grandmother, but rightfully she should be called· great, great·, grandmother. When she was born her oldest brother was already a grandfather; that would make her grandmother at her birth. Now she is old, dear me, I know not how old. However, because of the family history she is honored as being one hundred and fifty years old. Crazy? No, not she. Had she not become a Christian, I would say she had more sense than some whole clans, yet you can not tell; old age will kick up such curious pranks. It may be that she is getting in the limbos, otherwise, why should a person of her age take up with something new and strange?"

"It does, indeed, seem that she is losing her mind," said the magistrate. He ran his eye further down the line. "What have we here, young women? How this wickedness has spread! I must crush it out," he added with decision, "how is it that it has captivated our young and pretty women? Ah, Secretary, I must see those faces. Tell them all to stand." The order went out and was repented in chorus by the magistrate's servants who had formed a half circle around the prisoners.

They rose to their feet. Mr. Kim and Grandmother Pagoda looked frankly into the eyes of the magistrate; others of their number shifted their eyes as if they had, indeed, been guilty of some crime. The three young women turned their faces aside and their cheeks crimsoned with shame. They had never before been gazed upon by other than members of their own families, and their faces crimsoned as the magistrate and his servants gazed into their faces with many a coarse jest.

Grandmother Pagoda looked at the magistrate and then down the line into the faces of her three young friends. On cither cheek burned a red spot.

"Your Excellency," she said at last, "I am a poor, old, ignorant woman, perhaps I have no right to speak, but from the laws of the land and the dictates of etiquette I did not know that in case the Magistrate arrested any of his people he would allow them to be treated with insult, at least not till they were condemned."

"What, speak you to the magistrate thus?" cried a runner. "I'll teach you," and he struck her with the palm of his hand across the face. "Teach him his duties, will you? Another word and your old age will not

save you. What difference is there between an arrested person and a condemned person when it comes to the Christians?" The magistrate did not rebuke him, and he walked off muttering something about insolence of old age.

The magistrate waved his hand and the runners grew quiet while the prisoners waited for him to speak.

"Here, you," he said, pointing to a rugged looking man with a skin burned into a deep brown, who stood in the middle of the line, "What is your name?"

"O-Kang-suk," said the man.

"Where do you live?"

"I live in this town, sir, down by the creek just above the bridge."

"What are you following this wickedness for? Tell me by what means does it lead you from your family, your ancient clan traditions, and cause you to incur the wrath of the spirits of your home, and jeopardize the safety of your neighbors, because of such infidelity? Speak fellow, tell me, why?" "I think myself most happy, your Excellency, that I can speak before you on this matter. Though I am dull of thought and ignorant of most things, I will try to give you an idea of the motives that have led me to do what you have been pleased to term, 'this great wickedness.' My neighbors all know me, so do some of your servants. If they will, they can testify how 1 was of all the roughs in this town the greatest tough and filled with all villainy. Why sir, I have been the bully of the town many years, and, at some time or other, I have thrashed nearly all the younger generation; I have fought with every man in your service, and if they will testify to the truth, they will tell you that I liked them all, but as they finally became connected with this office, they have each one been diligent to see that I was punished for their humiliation. Why, sir, l hardly know how many times I have spent periods in your prison here, and I can show you scars all over my legs where I have paid the penalty of many an escapade and some of. the sins of my neighbors, and, sir, you will pardon me, but I often used to long for a chance to show you that I could drink more wine in a day than you could. Many said I could not do it, but I believe even now I could have done so. I was guilty of all these sins and many more that I now blush to name. When I visited markets, which I often did, as I made my living a good part of the year traveling from one market to another, I did not think that I was happy, or that the day had been spent well unless I had crushed someone's hat You may punish the innocent as all magistrates do and have laid up many sins against the day of wrath, but I believe I was more wicked than you, sir. Do not think that I did not know better, and did not have times when I wanted to reform; they

were many, but 1 could not do so, anymore than can you. I have been called in question so many times for the work of the devil at this place that I am now glad to be called here in question for my Lord's work." Here he extended his open palms toward the magistrate and while the tears trickled down his sunburnt cheeks, exclaimed with his face all aglow, "My sins are gone—all gone—and I am happy! happy!" Mr. Kim said "amen" deeply and solemnly.

The magistrate was mystified, and was growing angry; he had never dealt with anything like it before. What should he do?

"The brazen scoundrel," said he, to his secretary, "he would pretend that his new faith had reformed him. What mummery is this anyway? The old hag sings, and the preacher say's 'amen.' What shall I do with them? Did you say that Kim was associated with the foreigner?" he said without giving his secretary time to answer. "Ah, I have it, they refuse to work in their fields on the seventh day, don't they, ah, yes, and their noise is a nuisance."

"Here, you!" he called to the waiting line, "put out your hands, let me see them," the order was repeated by a dozen yamen runners. "Out there with them, you there, you women, out with them now, or I will flog you and have done with it."

They extended their hands before him, rough and worn with toil, and the secretary was sent down to examine them closely. "What do you say"—asked the magistrate "are they idle?" "They may be, but their hands are as rough as a dog's paws," was the reply.

"Well, well, but I was told they were idle."

The hands of the little group gradually fell from weariness.

"What!" roared the magistrate, "disobey me! Out with those hands, or I will flay you with the paddle." The command brought all hands out again, but the strain was too great for the young women and they broke into tears as their hands again came down to their sides. The secretary whispered something in the magistrate's ears and the latter nodded his head.

"Down on your knees," was the order, "now answer from the dust." They all fell on their knees with their heads to the ground.

"Now answer," commanded the magistrate, "are you idle one day during each week?"

Mr. Kim became the spokesman for the company. "Yes, your Excellency," he said without looking up from the earth, "that is our practice."

"One day out of seven," repeated the official, "that means two months out of every year, idling for two months. No wonder your heads

arc full of all wickedness, what mean you?"

"A word please, your Excellency," came the muffled voice of a man who had addressed the magistrate so bravely before. "Out with it you vagabond, what now? Be quick about it."

"Pardon me, sir, for being bold to speak, but before I became a Christian I spent half my time either getting drunk or getting sober. I spent six months of the year after that manner, and besides I was often injured in fights which made me idle many days, and, too, I often injured the other man and he was idle also. I beg of you not to take my word for it but ask anyone, or all of your servants if what I say is not true. Now, sir, I work every day except the Sabbath, and have of my income bought a house, and God willing it shall be paid for soon. I never owned one before—I am now 40 years old. Not only that sir, but I have also persuaded two men on either side of me to give up lives of drunkenness and they are making money too. You could get a good deal more money out of me by squeezing me now than you could have done before I was a Christian."

"Enough, fool," replied the secretary, "we want no more of your prattle. You prove the vileness of your heart by making one word in your defence and adding one more to insult the Magistrate."

"Now you Kim, the gospel talker, what say you? Out with it."

"The previous speaker has put the matter plainer than I could have done," was the reply, "though I may add one point more, that is, the matter of observing the Sabbath in the worship of our God is binding upon us as a moral question, and whether it means life or death we shall have to do as our conscience dictates. To disobey you may mean suffering, sir, but to disobey God means eternal punishment. Pardon me, but your Excellency will know how to judge us in that case."

The respectful but firm voice of the speaker infuriated the magistrate. "What have we here? You defy me, you, you offspring of dogs, you lead this people to rebel against my will. Death! Fool, it means death! Such language means death! Hearken, you vermin of the dust; let me hear of your being idle another day and I will beat the flesh from your bones, do you hear?" He then motioned to his secretary to continue the examinations.

"You have heard the commands and threats of his Excellency, now mark you and obey the man who has never broken his word. There is still more to follow. Answer, you from Rocky Ridge. The noise you make which you call singing is a nuisance and an offence to the town and to the ears of his Excellency, the Magistrate, and it must stop."

"I am sorry," said Mr. Kim, "that our singing has given offence. Yes, indeed, it would be possible for us to worship without singing, but it

would not be natural. Our songs are but the outburst of joy; to stop it is like stopping the bird of its song. When we gather it will be difficult to restrain the burst of song, but—"

"Hold, there," commanded the secretary, "there is something still to follow, a command that if obeyed may help you in restraining the burst of song," and he took a slip of paper from a table and read. "Gathering of people for whatever cause without permission within the bounds of this judiciary is from henceforth prohibited, on penalty of arrest and punishment—" this is his Excellency's command. Have you heard? And, furthermore, the reading of what is called the Bible is prohibit ed. Hear and obey. Return loyally to the service of his Majesty the Emperor, obedience to the government, and faithfulness to the worshipful respect of your ancestors. You have heard the commands. Disobey on the peril of your lives."

"Do you hear," was asked each one in turn and they all replied. "Yes, your Excellency, we have heard."

When the company of Christians was dismissed, Mr. Kim fell in behind the rest as they turned to pass out of the yard, but before he stepped through the little gate at the side entrance he was arrested by a motion from one of the magistrate's servants and brought back before the magistrate,

"I will hold you," said that official, "responsible for the actions of these Christians, and if they break my commands it will go hard with you." Mr. Kim met his look with a calm dignity but was allowed to make no reply.

The attitude of the Christians in the mind of that official argued trouble, there was no cringing or protesting, and when he came to reflect they had made no promises to' obey. It angered him, and his minions considered it safe to keep at their distance the rest of the day, and when they replied to a command it was with the greatest alacrity and with their loudest and most prolonged. calls of "yea-a-a-a."

The little company found their way by natural impulse down to the chapel. Mr. Kim took his seat on the raised platform at one end of the room and they gathered around him and looked into his face as a child gazes into the face of a parent. He was their leader and must tell them what they must do. Even the man who had sat shivering from apprehension while in the presence of the magistrate was there and still shivered for fear, but he would be nowhere else. Mr. Kim looked down at their upturned faces and a great pity filled his heart.

"It is all right, Brothers, and Sisters," he said soothingly, "we have already broken his command in gathering here, but while you were all

passing out, he called me back and told me he would hold me responsible for all that should occur."

"No! no! it must not be that our Pastor suffer for us;" someone half sobbed. "Why, we ought to have had more discretion, and have not come here."

"Shall we not quietly withdraw?" suggested someone.

"What," said another, "we cannot pray any more, we can not read the Bible any more; we can not come here any more, and we can not sing any more." Then there was a pause, and so still was it that the chirping of a cricket filled the room with its plaint. Finally Grandmother Pagoda began to hum in an undertone "Stand up, stand up for Jesus." She looked up at the preacher and her eyes kindled. Receiving a nod from him, she raised her voice a little louder, someone started in to follow her, the pastor smiled his approval and others hummed it together, then when they struck up the third stanza the company rose to its feet and with their faces streaming, sang, till the song swept out over the town, up across the hill to the home of the magistrate and echoed back again from the .mountain cliff.

"Let us pray," said Mr. Kim. Long and earnest were their prayers for help to endure the suffering that now awaited their defiance of the magistrate's words; there were many sobs, "O Lord!" they cried, "help us to testify of Thee even though it be with beatings and death."

They turned to passages of Scripture and read aloud scenes in the New Testament of persecutions, and conquering faith, nor did they neglect the story of the martyrdom of Stephen. They read without formality, responding as different ones called for this passage or that. Mr. Kim let the meeting take its own course, and only assumed control when the darkness of the approaching night made it seem wise to send the exhausted people to their homes. He arose, and instantly each one gave closest attention.

"And now," he said, "go to your homes to pray and to rest. I do not think any of you will be called on to suffer for today's loyalty to Him and the testimony to your faith. Now, may God keep you, my dear people." They departed in silence, but not till each one had come forward and taken their pastor by the hand and looked earnestly into his face.

"Hadn't you better leave the town for a while," some one suggested. Mr. Kim held the man's hand in both of his and looked earnestly down into his eyes and replied

"Peter said unto Him 'Far be it from thee, Lord,' and Jesus replied get thee behind me Satan.' Take it back, you will, won't you, my friend; you would not want me to deny my Lord?" He smiled down at the man till his would-be friend broke into tears and left the room.

Mr. Kim resided in the home of one of the Christians, and when

his host stretched himself out on a mat for the night, the preacher continued long on his knees in prayer. Their sleeping arrangements were simple. A coarse mat covered each floor, and was their bed; a wooden block served each for a pillow. During the night, his host awoke and saw Mr. Kim sitting by the candle with his Bible still open before him: The morning-light was just creeping in through the papered windows when there came a knock at the door. Mr. Kim responded immediately to the call, and as he opened the door, a liveried runner of the Magistrate stood before him and ordered him to follow. Without question Mr. Kim followed at the man's heels. He was taken to the prison, and before entering the building the runner called out in a prolonged "hello" which was taken up by many others and repeated again and again till the call echoed back from the mountain side. All in the town knew that an important capture had been made by the magistrate's runners and the word "Christians" was on the lips of the people.

Mr. Kim was thrust into the prison and no explanations were made and he asked no questions. He knew that the Magistrate intended to visit upon him the punishment due all those who had disobeyed his orders. All that day he waited apprehensively for the trial and the inevitable punishment but no one visited him and no food was brought to his cell. Occasionally he heard voices in trivial conversation, or in high altercation. During the early morning there had been a trial and the prisoner had been placed on a plank and beaten. He heard the cries and moans and the victim had been dragged back into a cell adjoining his own and left there to bemoan his bruises. It was hard to wail, harder than punishment. It was evident that his friends were not permitted to see him, for he had confidence in their willingness to suffer in the effort to help their pastor. Their absence added testimony to the rigor of his coming punishment. He watched the sun when it swung westward and shot its rays between the heavy planks of his prison—then silence reigned over the place. The light spot on the floor began to stretch across the room; he watched it as it traveled bit by bit toward the opposite wall; he listened for noises while his eyes measured the distance between this bit of earth and the sun's rays, then when the space was covered he noted another task for the sun to perform, and again watched it through its labor till at last the bright streak had stretched to the opposite side of the room. Then it slowly climbed the wall till it had reached as high as his head when it suddenly grew dim. A roof on the opposite side of the yard was shutting off the light. Finally it went out and the sun had finished its daily task. He watched the shadows of the evening darken up his cell till twilight reigned within, then the corners darkened and gloom filled the room. At last only a halo of twilight

hovered around the heavily barred aperture used as a window on the opposite side of the room. It was above his head. He went to it, pulled himself up to the opening and looked out at the yard and the silent building on the opposite side. He tried the bars without intent otherwise than a restless desire to feel their strength. They resisted his efforts to stir them. He then sat down on the opposite side of the room and waited. It was so hard to wait. At last he bowed in prayer, and then with peace in his heart stretched himself on the ground to rest.

How long he had been sleeping he did not know, but suddenly, he was awakened by a light, flickering through the cracks of his prison wall, and voices speaking in low guarded tones. The chain rattled on his door and two men came in. They each carried a heavy cudgel and one of them had slung a rope over his shoulder.

"Delighted to see you," said a voice whom he recognized as Chang-dingi, "Sorry we have not better quarters for you, but our country is poor and her guest rooms, I fear, are not luxurious. In fact I fear you are in a hard way. We know you and we know that you have committed no crime; however, the magistrate has determined to make an example of you. My friend here, and l, have determined to help you if we can, that is if you will let us. Now, there is a little custom which is followed in this prison with which you may not be familiar, otherwise, you no doubt would express delight at our coming, The prisoners are in the habit of making their keepers a present and they in their turn agree to make the punishment light. Of course we do not know what your sentence will be, but you can not hope to escape the paddle. We have some skillful men with us who can strike terrific blows without hurting. A few days ago my friend here pounded the end of the paddle almost to pieces on the ground, and the magistrate thought the prisoner was being beaten terrifically. I simply told the prisoner that whenever he heard the paddle fall he must howl lustily, throw up his head, and make all the hideous grimaces known to fiends; he did his part well and got off without a scratch. I only charged him five hundred *yang* and my friend here charged him only five hundred yang. One thousand yang; and he escaped with a whole skin! Cheap payment, wasn't it? What do you say." They had squatted down on the ground with Mr. Kim, and the light fell full into their faces, nonchalant, humorous, yet filled with cunning cruelty.

"Friends," said Mr. Kim in reply, "I am a Christian and it is against my religion to lie even to gain great advantages. I want you to believe me when I tell you that I have no money. I receive a monthly stipend from my employer and when I have paid my traveling expenses out of it there is nothing left. I have not even money enough to send home to my wife and

child. My home is 800 li from here. My wife tills our rice fields for a living; were I not preaching the Gospel and doing it from the standpoint of sacrifice, it would be with a sense of shame that I have to confess that I do not add to the support of my family. My wife is a true woman and for the love of the cause to which I have given my life does her task cheerfully. I tell you frankly and sincerely I have but few cash that I could give. I beseech you, do not press me in this matter for I have told you the truth. Let me meet whatever cruelty the magistrate may be disposed to put upon me, for, indeed, I am ready to be offered up for the cause I love, and let me add lest you should not understand me, and please give close attention to my meaning; though I might have any amount of money I would not bribe you under any consideration. It will save needless effort on your part if you can understand that it would be impossible for me to break a moral law enjoined upon me by my religion. Suffering and even death are simple things; to break God's law by a falsehood might overwhelm me for eternity."

He had spoken with simple dignity and in a language that had carried conviction. It was. not what they expected to hear. They had looked for sullen refusal, or whimpering protestation which might end in a compromise. They came prepared, how-ever, to get their money however stubborn the resistance.

"I fear," said the previous speaker at last, "that you do not know that at first we would make a polite request for what we want and then if we do not receive it, or a reasonable sum, we compel the prisoner to give what we demand. That is the custom of the prison and it would really seem unreasonable to break so good and so old a custom. Now think a bit before you come to so determined a decision. See," he added holding up the rope and showing his cudgel, "we came prepared to enforce our request. There are a good many hours between now and daylight and your trial can not come off before nine o'clock to-morrow. His' Excellency does not rise with the cock crowing. It is astonishing how much beating a man will take before he yields," he continued meditatively, as if to give time for the form of his words to take effect, "you are a rugged chap and it would take some time for us to beat resistance out of such a mass of muscles but in the end you would be beaten to the floor. Why, man, some people think that the magistrate's paddle is terrible, but it is only a mother's caress beside what happens in these cells sometimes when we have a specially obstinate prisoner. Let me see." he added, as if ruminating over the matter, "800 li from here a few paddy fields? I believe he is telling the truth, as above all things he claims honesty. Now one of our men happens to come from a town near there; the good man might

give us an order on his wife, and if she has not ready money, why she could mortgage one of her fields; or an order written to his employer stating that he was under distressing circumstances, that would certainly bring money to one so faithful to his employer. See here," he added, turning directly to Mr. Kim, "you see we often have to suggest to our friends easy methods out of financial difficulties. You may have just overheard my meditations on the matter; if you have, why, just consider them addressed to you and kindly be as expeditious as possible and write out such an order for us. See," he continued, "we came prepared in all these little details. I have a sheet of paper and I think that my friend here will be able to produce a pen. Oh, yes, I forgot some of our friends are not ready with the pen on business matters of this kind. I will therefore write out for you the form and then you will not even have to copy it; that will be so easy and simple you will hardly know that it has been done."

He then bent down to the lantern and wrote on a slip of paper a demand for one thousand yang to be paid to the bearer. Now," said he, straightening up, "I have left proper places for you to fill in the names of any persons you may see fit; ,probably your wife would be the easiest one to address; we might let you have paper enough to make a love letter out of it; as I think of it, that would be a better plan. You will pardon me for suggesting these little details, but I have found by long practice that these things come a trifle awkward to the uninitiated. Not every one is in the habit of writing love letters. No reflection intended, you know."

"Dear, dear it does seem such a pity that men will often be so foolish as to refuse to do what after much suffering they will be compelled to do anyway. It seems to me, friend, that your argument is fallacious for who could blame a man for doing what he is compelled to do; or, who on earth would order a man to do what he could not do? Would you order a coolie to pick up a house and carry it on his back, and because he could not do so would you beat him for not obeying? No, you would have more sense. Now, is your God less just than you? If we beat you into a pulp could you help giving to us? Bribe? Why man you use the wrong word, you are not bribing us; we are robbing you and compelling you to give to us. Would you be condemned for being robbed? Your moral argument will not stand. Now, would it not be better for you to shell out quietly and let us labor for your interest to-morrow, or if you think that by mitigating your punishment tomorrow it would be tantamount to a bribe on your part, why, to save your conscience, we will let you take the whole force of the beatings, that is, if you frankly say that you want it to be so, but in any case, we are here to rob you. Understand it is robbery if that idea fits your conscience any better. Most people like to understand that we are helping

them and they pay an honest price the same as a man would pay the price of a shelter from a storm. I really fear that to-morrow will be a stormy day for you; usually they think it is for their advantage, that is all they know about it, and I think that they are right, but as we are liberal and generous as to other people's opinions, you are privileged to look at it from any direction you want to. Now, friend, here are slips of paper and here is a good pen and a light sufficient for the work; just take them in your hand and if needs be, think of it a moment, but in any case sign what I have written."

Mr. Kim reached for the slips of paper as they were handed to him and immediately tore them into bits and replied:

"In many things I am weak and do not always understand God's word, but among the many blessings He has bestowed upon me is a healthy body and there lies no power in the hand of man to rob me in the way you have planned. To knock me down and take from me my money would not be difficult, but to compel me to sign such a paper is beyond the power of you or your magistrate or any other man, and therein lies my responsibility. To submit to dishonesty for personal comfort would in my mind, be as great a crime as to commit the dishonest act myself."

"Well," said the runner, "I regret exceedingly your decision, as it will impose upon us an unpleasant task and cause you considerable inconvenience." Motioning to his companion, they attempted to seize Mr. Kim by the wrists. He had risen with them. He had hunted the tiger in his northern home to a purpose, and lacked neither strength nor courage, and when seized, he straightened up and caught his tormentor under the chin and with one motion hurled him through the partly open door. The act was so sudden and unexpected that the second man had not recovered himself before Mr. Kim picked him up and shook him till his teeth rattled and he cried out in terror. Mr. Kim dropped him and he ran incontinently for the door. Just without the door he stumbled over his accomplice who had begun to recover from the shock of his fall. They stated o flee, then thought of the open door, and with one impulse turned to close it but Mr. Kim stood in the doorway looking down upon them. The man who had acted as spokesman in the dialogue with Mr. Kim was a coward but he had some wit and raised his voice for help, but the words were strangled in his throat. "See here," said Mr. Kim sternly, shaking the man with such good will that he crumpled into a heap when he released him. "I am a prisoner of the Magistrate and as yet uucondemned and you will lay hands upon me unlawfully at your peril. You may not agree with my philosophy but you will agree that I am not helpless. You have called yourselves robbers, which is correct, and I shall defend myself as I would against any

highwayman. Now take note; your clubs are in my cell and I can use them, note also that your rope is there and I would not hesitate to tie both of you to the post where you have made others suffer so often. For me to escape would bring you into trouble, would it? Well, you need not fear my escape, which as you see I could easily do. I am here to answer for no sin, and fear nothing, but to the Magistrate alone do I submit." The moonlight scudding from beneath a cloud filled the yard with light, and showed the prison key at Mr. Kim's feet. He picked it up and handed it to the astonished jail keepers and withdrew within the cell. He listened to the grating of the heavy key in the lock, and to the retreating feet—then lay down and was soon lost in profound slumber. He did not realize, however, the implacable purpose of the men of blood. Had he done so, no tiger in his mountain home would have watched with a more wakeful eye. He underrated their resources even as they had underrated his strength.

The two men in crime hastened to take counsel with their friends regarding the strangest of all strange creatures with whom they had come in contact. Four boon companions were sleeping on the floor of one of the rooms that open out on the street in front of the Magistrate's office.

"What's up now," they asked when Mr. Kim's two persecutors awoke them. "Ah," said one, "got it easy, did you? How much? Come now, divide your plunder. We gave the job to you thinking you had a tough customer." These and other remarks were hurled at the two men as they entered the room and roused out the sleepers.

"Dead easy? Fool," repeated their leader, "dead easy? Go try it yourself. Come now, out with you, we have work to do, every one of you—out I say," and he delivered himself with quick jerky commands. They were fully awake now. "What," they asked, "has he escaped, if so pay your own fiddler."

"Escaped? Fools. I say we have work to do. The man is safe enough, but the biggest fiend that has entered this hole since the days of Confucius," and they explained what had befallen them in their efforts to rob their prisoner.

"Why," said the 1eader, "he threw me out of the door as I would throw a pebble at a bird."

"He shook me too, but I was not ready for him," said the other man.

"Blessed thing you were not ready," retorted the first with a sneer. "If you had been, he would have shaken the life out of you."

"He is not a man—he is a demon," his companion replied.

"Demon? Well, he may be, but he has some of the most serious moral convictions that I ever heard a demon possessed. Instead of

breaking our heads and running away when he had a chance, he gave me the key and asked me to lock him in. H-a-a-a! I would have been under the paddle had he left. I suppose I should be grateful to him, but he has defied us, and he has fields that can be made over into money, and the whole gang must turn out."

"To get our heads cracked?" asked some one.

"No, no, no danger," was the reply, "'you have the imagination of a donkey. You know that we don't fight with brute force when we can help it. We are gentlemen, who can smoke a long pipe or drink a good cup of wine, but we are not so vulgar as to allow ourselves to be mauled. We leave all that to the Christians. Say, you there," he called to a man near the door, "run and get that rope we use in emergencies, and when you pass the prisoner's cell do so lightly and note if .the moon is shining on the front yet—if you should hear him snoring so much the better. If I understand the chap, the little act of hurling us out doors did not raise a beat of his pulse and he is already snoring like any other brute." The man departed to do as bidden.

"See here," said the leader to his crew, "I noticed while I was talking, that he had been lying down to sleep before we arrived. He lay with his feet to the opening on the front side of the building and his head in a direct line towards the opposite wall. The wood pillow is a large one and supposing there were a rope with 'a noose to it and it should drop just beyond his head and across his chest while he is sleeping; and then suppose some one should pull on that rope suddenly would it not catch under his head and don't you think a good vigorous pull would double that mountain of muscle into a heap?"

"And then?" some one asked.

"The three of you will rush in at the door and seize him, see?"

"Supposing he is not sleeping? Few people sleep when expecting a beating the next day."

"If, if," replied the speaker with impatience, "you might as well stir a hog out of the mire as to stir some people to do anything besides eating and drinking. I tell you, last night was the night when he lay awake. He knew by all reason that he would be arrested. Did not the man who brought him up say that he replied immediately when called, and that he was fully dressed, and can't I tell a man when I see one. He is one of those slow blooded men who fight like a fury one moment and forget it the next. To-night is the time he must sleep, he has had nothing to eat since last night, and I tell you he will sleep."

"I believe you are in league with the devil," was the reply. "Go ahead, you throw the rope and we will rush the door, but you have got to

tell us the truth—whether you have him or not."

The leader replied with a scornful snort.

Soon the door opened and the man with the rope appeared. He reported that the moon was just creeping down the face of the building.

"Was he sleeping?" the leader asked.

"Sleeping? How should I know? I will go and ask him if you say so. Did you expect me to go in and enquire, or hello through the cracks? I heard nothing of him, and he may be dead for aught I know."

Presently the six companions repaired to the building where Mr. Kim was confined. They carried a table with them and softly placed it beneath the window out of which Mr. Kim had gazed. The aperture was large enough to receive a man's hand and arm. The leader climbed up on the top of the table and looked cautiously in and held his face to the window a long time. .Finally turning around softly he motioned to his comrades to bring the rope. Some one did so and he motioned three others to go to the door and stand by to help him. With steady persistence he worked the rope through the aperture and coiled it up carefully in one hand. He worked the noose up till a large loop hung from his fingers, then he gathered it up and threw it. The aim was good and it landed. squarely over the sleeper's head and without a second's pause the rope was pulled taut. At the first touch Mr. Kim was on his feet but the rope tightened around his neck. At first he could not tell the character of his enemy and swung out his arms wildly. Then his hands touched the rope and he seized it with a mighty grip, but his head was confused and a helplessness crept down through his mighty arms and legs and he tottered. In vain he clutched at his throat, he heard voices at a great distance. The next he realized he was lying on his face, his hands were bound behind him and his feet were tied together. When he was turned over he looked up into the face of the man whom he had thrown from his cell two hours before.

"Very good," laughed his tormentor, "the second laugh is better than the first always. You live in the north, do you, where men wrestle with bears and tigers, but now you see we have cut your claws. When you get out of here you may tell Grandmother Pagoda if you like that her friend has outwitted the gigantic preacher. Tell her that brains are worth far more than brute force and if she would make a preacher out of me I would be the best proposition in which she could invest."

"Out with you now," said one of his associates; "if you have work to do get at it, and be done with it. If I mistake not you are still far from that plot of land you were speaking about."

"Quite true friend, thank you for reminding me, I certainly had quite forgotten what we came for," was the reply. "Now that we have this

bear fast where he cannot wriggle, we will let you and your friends go to sleep. You can leave the rest of the work to us according to our previous arrangement."

"Welcome you are," said the other. "And welcome to all you get is my opinion," said another; and they strode out leaving the two men with their victim.

"We shall spend no more time in arguments," said the leader. "I see you and I stand on an altogether different basis as to moral questions," saying which he proceeded to tie Mr. Kim's feet high up on the wall to an iron ring that had been fastened there for that purpose. The two men pulled at the rope till their prisoner rested on his shoulders .

Up to that time Mr. Kim had said nothing and the two men proceeded as if there were nothing , expected of him. When the victim was in place, the leader said—

"Now I want to be fair with you. I have made an exact copy of that paper you tore up so rudely; and when you say that you will sign it I will let you down and give you a chance; then your troubles will be at an end as far as we are concerned. Of course, the magistrate may have some questions to ask you in the morning."

He waited a moment, but as Mr. Kim said nothing, the other man who had been holding a flat piece of plank in his hand brought it down with a resounding blow on the bottom of one of Mr. Kim's feet. Again and again was the blow repeated. Nothing but Mr. Kim's hard breathing suggested the agony it caused him. At last weary of his task the club was turned over to the one who had superintended the whole matter. "Oh, yes, I see it is my turn now," he said with cheerful accents, "then I will tickle his feet awhile and when I am weary be ready to take your turn again," he said addressing his companion, and he raised his club to strike, but pausing said, "Perhaps, though, our friend is ready to sign that bit of paper," and he looked into the face of Mr. Kim. "No?— well we can keep this up for three or four hours yet before the magistrate's turn comes," and he struck the bottoms of Mr. Kim's feet a terrific blow, then paused. "Come now, don't be a fool. We could kill you here and report that you had taken poison; men often do that you know when tired of trouble. What say you?"

It may have been from the agony of the blows that were rained upon his feet, or it may have been the strained position of nearly having to stand on his head. Mr. Kim's head grew dizzy and he fought with himself to keep his senses. How long they beat him he did not know. He thought he heard voices talking as if from a long distance, and he thought he was listening to singing in the church and heard Grandmother Pagoda say

"amen" and he himself tried to say "amen." When he came to himself he heard the lock rattle on the door and saw a candle burning dimly at his side. It fluttered a moment and went out. His hands and feet were free and he drew himself up into a sitting position. Silence reigned throughout the prison. He sat in an agony of pain, pain that burned at the bottom of his feet and swept upward through his legs and crept up his spine to his head. Then he was tormented with a raging thirst and wondered at his weakness.

"How hard is dying, yet how easy it is to kill," he murmured to himself.

## CHAPTER XVII. THE TRIAL

Mr. Kim was led out or the dark cell into the open court blinking and feeling his way into the strong sunlight. He limped painfully. Presently his eyes became accustomed to the light, and he saw in front of him the magistrate seated on the open maru ready for the examination. The image of Buddha could not have been more impurturbable and dignified than was the magistrate. His pig eyes looked over fat protruding cheeks at the Christian. Mr. Kim's heart sank at the sight of him. On the magistrate's right stood the dark figure of Mr. Cho, who out of respect for the magistrate had removed his overgrown spectacles and stood holding them in his hand. As he met Mr. Kim's glance he slowly fitted the spectacles to his sharp nose and turned their moon-like surface full upon the prisoner and gazed with nonchalance as if Mr. Kim were an ordinary specimen of unfortunate humanity in whom he had only the most distant curiosity. In this tableau, Mr. Kim read his fate and nerved himself for the coming suffering. Scattered about the court were a score of yamen-runners, each one with his eyes fixed upon the victim. Not all of them were naturally hard hearted, but, hunting men was their trade and a man under the paddle would open avenues of gain, so they were pleased. Low comments flew from lip to lip of these yamen leeches as Mr. Kim slowly stepped from his cell.

"Any money?" asked one.

"No," was the disgusted reply; "I spent the greater part of the night trying to coax it out of him."

"Coax, eh? caressed him I suppose," was a bantering reply.

"Sure," said the first speaker, "patted him on the bottom of the feet with the soft side of a board, but he does not limp nearly as much as the one you exhorted into liberality a day or two ago."

"Got something," said the other, "and I advise you to learn of me

and caress with more energy the next time. Bah! a wakeful night, groans for music, no one to the dance and still a slim purse. Man, you have the back bone of a rag and the courage of a rat. Strike hard when you strike; good blows will turn any set of old bones into cash. Why, man, if the fellow has not ready cash, his friends have."

"You talk of drawing water from a rock," returned the first; "you may be able to do it but I don't want to."

"Of course we are here to perform miracles."

"It might be blood. You forget the sages; human treatment for criminals."

"Ha-a-a-a!" replied the other; "beat and kill if you want to but don't be a sanctimonious fool!"

"You have the paddle to-day and we shall see if your doctrine will turn bones into cash'," was the reply.

The low buzz of voices was interrupted by a sharp command from the magistrate. "Kneel!" said he. The order was repeated in chorus by the yamen-runners as they wheeled into a half circle about their victim. Their attitude was a threat and their faces were full of menace.

As Mr. Kim fell upon his knees with his face to the ground he saw a heavy plank leaning against the wall and he shuddered.

The magistrate paused, looked down a moment to make the right impression, then extending his chin in the direction of the prisoner called:

"Your name."

"Your n-a-m-e!" burst from the throats of the yamen-runners and they ended the cry with a rising inflection more blood-thirsty than the howl of so many wolves.

"Kim-Nak-Do," said Mr. Kim.

"You live where?"

"Live where-e-e!" was repeated.

"Rocky Ridge," said Mr. Kim.

"Your business?"

"Your business?" was repeated with a roar.

"I preach the doctrine of Jesus," said Mr. Kim.

"You are charged with acts of sedition," said the magistrate, "are you guilty?"

"Guilty-e-e?" bellowed the runners.

"Not guilty," said Mr. Kim.

"A lie!" exclaimed the magistrate.

"A li-i-i-e-e," screamed the runners.

"The paddle!" ordered the magistrate.

"Pad-d-l-e-e" repeated the runners with glee.

The heavy plank was dragged from the wall and Mr. Kim seized and bound with face downward upon it. He was stripped of most of his clothing and the man who had boasted that cash could be beaten out of an old pile of bones was ordered to the paddle and commanded to strike. The paddle came down with terrific force. Forty blows the magistrate ordered and the runners howled, while the sickening thud could be heard far beyond the courtyard, heard by a people who had long grown used to the sound—so while the blows fell, they chatted with their neighbors over trivial things; rattled their dishes, or cooed to their babies, indifferent to the anguish of the man over the wall. No sound fell from Mr. Kim's lips, and people paused, to raise inguiry as one does when the usual ticking of a clock stops.

Just outside the wall a would-be-purchaser of a pipe contended with a shop keeper over the price.

"Forty cash," said the shop keeper,

"Too high," replied the purchaser.

"Forty, sir," said the dealer, "cheap, too cheap. Yesterday it would have been forty-five. Forty blows for the Christian and forty cash for my pipe. Lots of grit over there. Hard beating but no groans."

"Fifteen cash," said the purchaser.

"Preposterous," was the reply, "fifteen cash? Impossible; my family to support, and what with the filchings of the yamen-runners. They say they take tole of my stand for the price of their protection. You know they protect me as they do every one else they can lay their hands on. Fifteen? No sir! can't do it"

"Twenty," counted the magistrate over the wall.

"The magistrate has named it, twenty he says; twenty it shall be. I am a good citizen and take my orders from the magistrate. I will not complain though I lose. Lots of grit over the wall; heavy beating, but no groans; tough customer; guilty of hanging hard to his purse, won't shell out," and be looked severely at his would-be customer. "Avariciousness is a terrible crime and a man like that who won't shell out ought to be paddled," he added. "Yes, twenty cash you can have it for, twenty."

"No, not take it for twenty? What! Not for that? Why man I was giving it to you. Eighteen did you say? Eighteen cash? Never! Times are hard when an honest man must be beaten by all his customers and live in fear of a beating from the magistrate. No! no! don't go. Here take it," and he reached over the pipe with a sigh more audible than came from the lips of the victim inside the wall.

"Who are the Christians? and are they wicked; you asked?" continued the talkative merchant. "Yes, exceedingly wicked, the

magistrate says so, any man without cash is wicked and ought to be beaten."

Inside the wall even the runners seemed weary with the process of the beating. With each blow there was an upward spasmodic throw of the head, but no sound from the lips of the suffering man. Presently he spoke in an even tone.

"What was that?" said the magistrate, and the paddle was suspended in mid air.

"Crazy," said the ajun, listening.

"Out with it," ordered the magistrate. "What does he say?"

"He says," repeated the ajun, with his face close down to the plank: 'He who receives you receives me and he who receives me receives Him who sent me.'

"Now what is that," said the magistrate sharply.

"I am the bond slave of Jesus Christ," repeated the ajun with his ears down to the lips of Mr. Kim. "He who bruises me bruises Him who sent me."

"Strike!" said the magistrate. "What does he say now?"

"He talks low," said the man with the paddle, "can't hear."

"Down on your knees and listen," came the command.

"Ah!" said the man kneeling over Mr. Kim, "he is crazy. He says, 'Nomie, you are the prettiest of all the girls I know, let us make mud houses together down by the willows, where the moss covers the bank and the butterflies sail.' That is what he says, Sir, he is talking again. He says something about giving in."

"There, I thought I would make him give in," said the magistrate.

"He says, sir," continued the man, leaning over Mr. Kim, 'You have given in Nomie, and we shall walk hand in hand in God's eternal sunshine, you and I, Nomie."

"Crazy," said the magistrate, "untie him and let him up."

They cut him loose, but Mr. Kim did not get up.

"Up and to your cell!" they ordered, but he did not move. Then four men seized him, and dragged him into his cell, and the places on the cobble stones of the rough court-yard where his heels touched were painted red.

## CHAPTER XVIII THE LAW INTERPRETED.

The magistrate's minions stood watching the four men with their huge burden. Among them was Chan-ding-i whose eyes dropped from the

unconscious man to the red streaks on the rough pavement and his heart stirred as does the feelings of a man whose nature has been satiated with cruelty. Passion was gone, greed dismissed and something akin to remorse sprang up in his heart. "How easy to destroy even so powerful a body," he thought. "If he had died, what then? Is it true that he would live afterward and then what?" he murmured. As the burden disappeared into the prison yard the young man shook himself and turned abruptly towards the place where Mr. Kim had received his beating and then stared in astonishment, for by the instrument of torture stood Grandmother Pagoda. At the same moment the whole troup of runners discovered her with equal amazement. She was easily recognized for all had known her from childhood, and only two days had passed since she stood there before them to answer for her new faith. Chang-ding-i under the influence of his new emotion was filled with perturbation for the safety of his old friend and associate. He motioned her to leave.

"Hurry," he whispered, reaching her at a bound, "hurry, Grandmother, or there will be trouble, such trouble as you have not seen during your seventy-seven years, hasten!" he urged again. "Go Grandmother, the gate is open, go!"

Chang-ding-i," said she steadily, looking him quietly in the eyes, "I came here not to flee at the command of a lad who has forgotten the first law of the human heart. Flee from duty?" she said, shaking her gray head at him, "of course, what else could you think than to suppose that I value my body more than my principles. You must forsooth express the cowardice of your own heart; a heart that trades in torture and murder to satisfy its own lust."

The crowd pressed around the old lady, while Chang-ding-i, fairly abashed, endeavoured to shrink from her sparkling eyes. "What does she want," cried a dozen voices at once.

"I want," she replied with clear precision that mingled strangely with the quaver in her old voice, "I want to see the magistrate. He has not called me, nor arrested me, I, therefore, wish to stand before him a moment in speech."

By common impulse the company of runners retired from before the seat of the magistrate disclosing the quiet dignified figure of the old woman. She had worn no head band and her grey hair covered her head as a halo. Her features were wrinkled but showed the marks of beauty and in every line was the sign of sincerity, and from her face beamed forth a great resolve.

The magistrate had risen as soon as the beating was over and turned to enter his office. The commotion drew his attention and he

paused and scowled down into the yard, but at first he was unable to distinguish from among the crowd of heads the object of their interest; directly discovering the face of Grandmother Pagoda he called out—

"You there, Chang-ding-i? what is it? what is the matter? what does the woman want? who is it?" then he paused with a start and his face clouded with irritation. "What is she back here for? I have had enough of these Christians. What does she want? Standing in my presence! Why isn't she on her face in the dust?"

Chang-ding-i stepped up to the old lady and inquired in a loud formal voice what she wanted , and then came near enough to whisper.

"What mad freak brought you here Grandmother? Get out quick, the magistrate has drawn blood this morning and is licking his chops for more. Tell him quick, Grandmother, that you will make him a present of one of your small fields. You can afford it. Don't be a fool, dear Grandmother, save your bones and it will help the Christians also."

Grandmother Pagoda looked at the young man with scorn. "Tell him," she said, "that I have found a new law, or rather we have found new facts, relating to the law."

Chang-ding-i dared not delay longer and he delivered her message.

"Law," said the magistrate, "what has she, or any of this pestiferous crew to do with law? I am their law, tell her that," and his face flushed with anger, but being a coward he was startled that anyone should brave him with a quotation from the law. Grandmother Pagoda heard what was said and did not need the repetition of Chang-ding-i·, but as the magistrate had chosen to speak in that way she waited for the young man to tell her again.

"I have found," said the old lady as soon as she was permitted to speak, "by diligent study of God's word, in the course of which our whole body of Christians joined all last night, nor did we pause till the late cock crow this morning, that God commands us to obey all rulers and those who have authority over us."

"Good, very good," exclaimed the magistrate, not waiting for Chang-ding-i to repeat the words. "So says Confucius. I must look into these teachings. Pity you did not learn that before. It would have saved Mr. Kim a beating, had he read that passage. You did well in coming, madam. You certainly have sense," and the runners murmured their approval.

"I beg your further clemency," said Grandmother Pagoda.

"I fear you have not understood my full purpose, or rather all that the Christians have just learned in this matter. We are commanded to obey the law, and we are willing to take your commands as an interpretation of his Majesty's law. You have commanded concerning us that if we continue

Christians you will punish us and have hinted darkly of death to all those who follow Christ. Now, we shall obey you. We can not give up our faith; that would be disobeying God; but, we can come here and offer up our lives, thereby keeping your law also, so that we shall neither break the one nor the other. I have insisted as I am the oldest of all the Christians in this place to offer myself first. The rest agree that this is the true interpretation of the Scriptures and they will be along shortly to give themselves up to the penalty demanded by the law."

Before the astonished yamen runners could prevent it the old woman stretched herself out on the heavy plank. "Now strike," said the quavering voice, "strike old Grandmother Pagoda. If I die it is all right. Strike, that if I live I may sing and pray to Him. Why do you wait there," she called raising her head and looking at the magistrate who stood too astonished to speak.

"I was bitter once because I did not understand. God has forgiven me and I bear you no ill-will. You must keep the law and have no choice, you must strike. Come, Chang-ding-i, strike Grandmother Pagoda that the law may be satisfied. If it is death I will have all eternity to sing His praise, if it is life I shall have months, perhaps years, still to praise Him here, for He cares for me and thinketh upon me. 'Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth those who fear him.'"

"Fiends and furies!" shouted the magistrate, "out with the old hag, drive her off! Who opened the gate for this pestiferous brood to enter?" and he stormed back and forth on his platform. They pulled Grandmother Pagoda to her feet and were roughly hustling her out, when the magistrate called them to stop. "Who did you say were coming?" he demanded.

"The Christians," replied the woman, "you called them up two days ago. There were fifteen of us then, and since we learned the law, five others joined us. They are all coming, sir, and in a few days there will be many more."

"Do you mean they are coming here to be punished?" he exclaimed.

"To die," was the quiet reply.

"If they come here, I'll ..." then he paused, not finding a threat adequate to meet the case, and ended by storming at his runners, "Out with her" he shouted. "That is the way you keep the door to this place is it? Let another Christian dog in here and I will flay you alive!" and he departed within his office with his secretary, and Mr. Cho who followed fawningly at his heels.

Chang-ding-i found his way to the prison, where lay Mr. Kim on the damp ground too greatly bruised to move. He crept in softly. Mr. Kim

had recovered his senses and lay 1ooking up at the roof while his lips moved in prayer. Chang-ding-i watched him a long time in silence, inwardly calling him. a fool, and then calling himself a fool. "The world is topsy turvy," he said, "and the· biggest fools in it are the Christians." He went out and brought in a bowl of water and knelt at Mr. Kim's side.

"You may not want this," he said in his usual mocking voice. When the magistrate gets so overloaded with wrath that he is in danger of boiling over I see to it that there is a bowl of cold water near at hand. A drink of water on his part has saved many a culprit a heavy blow. It is the best medicine I know to cool wrath, soothe pain, or put a tormented man to sleep. No, don't thank me, I am not doing it for your sake, but for mine. Come now," he added without giving Mr. Kim a chance to reply, "I know you would like to get out of this at the earliest moment possible. You would be a nuisance here. We do not want you. I will see the magistrate and will have you thrown out on the bank here somewhere. Ordinarily I would say, l would send for your friends to help you home if you should make it to my interest, but I see that you could hardly stand another beating, and too, I am tired of it for today, but don't imagine that such would be the case tomorrow, or any other time when I might have an opportunity to interview you."

"I also think," replied Mr. Kim in a quiet voice, "that the side of the road would be preferable to this."

Chang-ding-i left and the hours passed wearily for the suffering man. At noon some one entered and placed a small bowl of boiled millet by Mr. Kim's side. Twilight was again setting when the chain on the floor rattled and Chang-ding-i entered with four other men. They brought in a stretcher made of heavy matting fastened across two poles. They laid it down on the ground near Mr. Kim and then lifted him on to it. Two men with straps over their backs bent to the ends of the poles and lifted the injured man up and carried him out. Chang-ding-i led them through the gate down the main road toward the center of the town. Mr. Kim breathed in the cool air gratefully as if he had been shut away from it for years instead of days.

"Well," said Chang-ding-i, coming close to the stretcher, "where do you want me to take you?"

"To the chapel," was his surprised reply, surprised to see the young man still at his side.

They deposited him on the chapel floor, and then under a kindly impulse Chang-ding-i went to Grandmother Pagoda's home and told her that Mr. Kim was in the chapel. That lady ran as fast as her ancient limbs would permit, to see her pastor. He greeted her with his old cheerful voice.

She did not stop to inquire how he was, or where he was hurt, she had seen such cases before. She ran to call other members of the church. When they came they examined his bruised limbs. The flesh seemed to have been fairly beaten to a pulp. They washed away the blood and dressed the wounds with the simple remedies they knew. Mother Pagoda looked at the wounds and shook her head. She knew better than any present what his chances for recovery were.

The Christians gathered around their injured pastor like so many children, with great love in their hearts, talking frankly of the possibility of his recovery, and of the pain of enduring the suffering. They whispered among themselves i the corners of the chapel, then crept on hands and knees to peer into his face and then back again to whisper. They brought Mr. Kim a bowl of carefully cooked rice, and gathered, with delight in their faces when he ate of it. When the usual time for the evening service drew near Mr. Kim asked them to lift him upon the platform, and a dozen hands responded with gladness. They laid him so that he could look into the faces of the people. He counted them, "twenty," he said. "Who are the new ones," he asked. He was told their names and they were brought forward and presented to him as if he had been some great prince. They bowed reverently and he gave them words of comfort as if they were the ones in distress and not he.

"You have not had a meeting since I was arrested?" he asked. When informed there had been no regular gathering for worship, he asked them all to be seated.

"Do you know what it means for us to engage in song?" he asked, with a grave look, and he glanced enquiringly into each upturned face.

"We know," said Grandmother Pagoda. Then she told Mr. Kim how she had spent the night previous with the· whole band of Christians trying to solve the riddle of how to obey the law of the magistrate and also the law of God at the same time, and told him how she had presented herself to the magistrate and with what results. Mr. Kim smiled and tears streamed down his face.

"Brave children of a brave ancestry," he said, "we will sing a victory song, 'All hail the power of Jesus name.' You will need to lift your voices for this is a rugged hymn and means praise only as it is sung with delight in the soul." Mr. Kim started the hymn though his face twitched with pain. Until late that night they mingled their songs and prayers with tears and clung together with a spirit of fervent devotion inspired by the apprehension of a terrible separation.

At last Mr. Kim dismissed them and they insisted on carrying their pastor to a more suitable place, but he refused to be moved saying that if

the hand of the magistrate fell on any he would be in a position to inform him that he was responsible for the disobedience to his commands.

The night was silent and the sound of singing swept over the town and reached the magistrate's ears and he was filled with fury. He swore by all the names that were both good and vile by which the Korean swears that he would have the life of that preacher and the whole obnoxious brood. Chang-ding-i was near at hand having regarded himself as important if anything of the character should occur. He stood at a distance among the servants, and muttered so that the magistrate should overhear, "A large brood and hatching very rapidly."

"How is that?" exclaimed that magistrate.

"I was simply remarking to my friend, your excellency, that five more broke shell last night and according to the noise there must be somewhere near fifty to-night just ready to leave the nest. They come with frightful rapidity."

"Fiends and furies! I will kill the whole brood with one blow," raved the magistrate.

"They will be easy to catch," said Chang-ding -i, having taken advantage of a word addressed to him to step forward. I have but to hint to them that you will allow them in the compound and in they will come swarming like so many hogs to the pen at night. We hardly have accommodations for so many, unless your excellency would kill them off one by one as they come; though it strikes me—" here he paused with proper deference to his master.

"Strikes you? who, or what strikes you, fool, out with it."

"I heard of late something concerning treaty relations and the rights of foreigners, but you know all about the law and our international relations and I need not presume to express my opinion," and Chang-ding-i turned to move off till ordered .to speak out what he had to say.

"I heard that no one had a right to arrest and punish a man under the employ of a foreigner. I believe he is called a body servant. But, of course., I know nothing of these things. If, however, you want to have them up for punishment they will all be here in half an hour. I shall no doubt have to bring the preacher on a stretcher," he added as if about to execute the magistrate's will.

"It is like an infectious disease," said the magistrate looking anxiously from face to face. "How it spreads!"

"Yes, it is more like a forest fire, the more you stamp it, the more it burns. You may stamp these out now, but unfortunately, I fear that many have already the new doctrine and have become infected though they have not yet joined themselves to the Church. Then too l hear that in some

sections of the country the people are nearly all becoming Christian, and the real embarrassment is there is no wall around such places to keep them shut in. They might, you know, under some impulse or other come into this section, especially as they delight to throw their lives away. I do not know as that privilege has been granted them much at large, but if they hear that you have killed off a large number it may delight their heart to make this their home."

"Out with you," said the magistrate, "I wanted someone to help me out of this trouble and not to offer difficulties, they are a sinful pestilent lot "

"Pardon me, your excellency," said Chang-ding-i, "I did not mean to lack solicitude. No one can hold greater reverence for your excellency and for your wisdom. If you say they are pestiferous and sinful that is enough for me, for if the just do not know what is right, what do so sinful creatures as we runners know?"

The magistrate looked at the young man suspiciously but that youth was looking meekly at the mat, on his face the gravity of Buddha.

"It seems to me," said the magistrate, "that the complaint of some who say your method of talking is like Bali, the robber chief, has some foundation. By the power of my office I would have you beaten to death were that to be the case."

"Could you hint so foul an association?" the youth replied with an aggrieved look. "Bali's fortunes are too fickle as well as vicious for honest men like me. I fear he has fallen into trouble."

"In trouble!" exclaimed the magistrate eagerly, "that is bad news, what was it, what! can we rid ourselves of Bali also?"

"I heard by the way of gossip that he had a fight with the devil who lives out in the salt swamps and the devil beat him."

"So! who tells it?"

"You know your excellency that Bali never speaks well of a man whom he thinks is a coward; you remember he has nothing to say commendatory of a magistrate because in some sections of Korea there are some not brave. Well, he is all the while shouting the praises, gossip has it, of this ugly brute called the devil. Now, Bali would not say that unless he has been beaten in combats and Bali himself is the only man who dares say he has been beaten; indeed he plainly hints of a struggle and defeat."

"Do you think now we could get this good devil of yours to run as a servant," said the magistrate rising and walking across the floor excitedly, then he paused suspiciously, "Why did you not tell me this before?"

Chang-ding-i turned his face to the magistrate with an innocent look; "Knowing that your excellency is above all petty prejudices or vulgar conniving, always resting the justice of all your acts on the law of disinterested truth, I thought the Devil's case would interest you only so far as it might become your duty to punish him in case or some evil deed, unless, indeed, your excellency found it your duty to aid the poor government by inviting him to divide with you. I have been watching him closely for your interest. Wealth I have not seen, but, sir, he is reputed to be the Devil, and the Devil is certainly evil, else why is his face painted so ugly in the shrines and it seems to me you have abundant reason for hailing the Devil of the salt marsh into your Excellency's presence. Such a course would be just, right and good."

"Fool," said the magistrate, "drowning ideas in a cess-pool of words, out with you now, before I have you paddled."

Chang-ding-i turned away with an aggrieved look, while the magistrate strode into his quarters with righteous hauteur.

## CHAPTER XIX MR. CHO AND BALI.

Mr. Kim was moved to Grandmother Pagoda's home and she nursed him as women only know how. The fight for life was long and doubtful and for many days friends crowded the door way and listened to Grandmother Pagoda's monotonous replies, "Wait and see."

That Mr. Kim might die was a matter of poignant concern on the part of the magistrate. Chang-ding-i had said that Mr. Kim was a servant of the foreigner and it would be dangerous to kill such a man. The result was that all this time the heavy hand of persecution was lifted, but when the magistrate heard that the wounded man was on the way to recovery his choler awoke with new fury. He would destroy the whole clan, root and branch, and he sent out spies to ascertain their strength and was astonished to learn that the little group had increased to over a hundred, that they were enlarging the building of worship, that the dangerous sect had spread to other villages and in some villages had become so numerous that there were not enough non-Christians left to purchase a cow for the annual sacrifice to the village demon. These conditions worried and bewildered the magistrate not a little, and he fumed with impotent rage.

The winter quickly passed among the most stirring times of Mr. Kim's life. In every direction groups of Christians had started up seemingly without any influence on the part of other churches. People would be found gathering each day trying to spell out the meaning of

some passage of Scripture and talking over the strange power astir in the land. Mr. Kim would give them a day or two of attention and then hurry on to another group. He had repeatedly tried to make friends with Mr. Cho but his approaches were all met with strong rebuffs and explosions of hate. The preacher had ruined his home, that man declared; he had sent from him the best woman that ever man had. Finally Mr. Cho informed his sympathetic neighbors that he had buried his wife; he would in time build a mound for her and hold the usual burial rites. Dead she was, dead she would always be, and Kim, the gospel talker, had killed her. It was a great grief to him that the magistrate had not killed the preacher.

"Kill them?" he said to one of his neighbors, meaning the Christians, "you can't do it, they will not die. Now, there was the old school teacher that some one rapped lightly on the head and he was dead before one hardly knew it, but," said Mr. Cho, "I myself killed the gospel talker once, the magistrate killed him once; and many schemes had afoot to kill him at other times, but he would not die, been can't kill them in an ordinary way. There is only one man who could kill him and do it in a manner that would appear a natural and reasonable thing for him to die. I will find that man," he declared with vehemence. "Strange the more you try to get rid of the preacher the more influence he has upon the people."

After mysterious hints as to whom that one could be who could successfully destroy the preacher, he made Bali a visit and out of the abundance of love that he had for that outlaw whom he now met face to face for the first time, he made him a present of considerable money. Bali knew that it precedented a demand, so he accepted the money with imperturbability as he did all that came to him for his own advantage. His starched coat spread out with added dignity, his face assumed more benignity, and when Mr. Cho attempted to present his own affairs he disposed of the conversation with the comprehensive decision that a connoiseur would bits of brick-a-brac in a curiousity shop. He would lead the conversation in some other direction with an imperiousness that compelled Mr. Cho to follow, and it was not long before Mr. Cho began to feel that he had been doing himself the greatest favor imaginable in making this remarkable man a present. His host seemed to fill the house. While he conversed with evident animation, a word in the direction of an adjoining room would bring a servant pell mell at his feet to do his bidding and with equal haste to scurry away upon some errand. They came and went with such frequency that it was evident that Bali was conducting his affairs with astonishing vigor, as if no guest had interrupted him. Mr. Cho could hardly get rid of his servants when he called one and they all had a part in his private affairs. Here was a man

around whom all his affairs seemed to move for him, and him alone, with bewildering rapidity and with the order of a machine. Bali directed the conversation to moral subjects and deplored the amount of injustice that was being practiced by the magistrates and the rich against the poor and helpless.

"A rich man who has all he needs, like you and me, for instance, who can make each other large presents without thinking of a return of the compliment, ought to show a spirit of unselfishness toward the poor and needy. Speaking of mutual gifts, I may say I appreciate the spirit of your coming immensely, as it expresses the spirit of altruistic generosity. I, myself, have often given considerable in that way without thinking of a return of service simply for the purpose of establishing a new order of things; then, too, the consciousness of having done something for any one for which one never expected a return of advantage is a delight. Ah! to have one's life filled with such deeds, the yellow valley will not be a hard place to rest when the blessings of many who have been helped follow one there."

"You have your sorrows," said Mr. Cho, speaking with desperate haste for fear he would be compelled to leave without mentioning the object of his errand.

"Sorrow," interrupted Bali reflectively, "well now, sorrow may be as one regards the vicissitudes of life, some things which seem to be sorrow to one person is nothing of the sort to another." "I have seen a child cry over the loss of a toy and a man laugh al the same kind of a loss. Now I have learned that it is far the wisest to laugh at one's losses, as they will then become a pleasure and not a regret; to cry over them is to be childish."

"I lost my wife," exclaimed Mr. Cho.

"Yes, yes, ah yes, so I have heard, and I have also heard that you proposed to do the proper thing, that is, to have a mourning rite over her and dismiss her from your memory. Now that is right. I have noticed that there is, as a rule, more pleasure than sorrow experienced at funerals. Now, as you are right and would not do things by halves, you would call together a company; say two hundred, and you would prepare a good feast with plenty of wine: taking it altogether, it would express the inimitable spirit of friendship for which you are so well famed. Then, too, mirth is the best cure for all ills, and in this particular case there will only be a hole dug in the ground and an empty box placed there, so that it will be really a very respectable affair and a delight to you all. I congratulate you on your broad thoughtfulness in the matter, and the commendable purpose you have of dismissing the whole matter from your mind. That will be capital!

why I have seen more people drunk at a funeral than at a market, and that is not saying little; it will indeed be a joyous occasion."

"You know Kim the gospel talker?" asked Mr. Cho in order to get another start Bali laughed, "Know him? I have met him. He carries the biggest stock of curious ideas that I have ever seen burden one man. His head is full and not being a small head the amount of his ideas is bewildering. He has a strange idea of reforming the country, so he runs around picking up all the curiously mismated people he can find, the old, the ignorant, the young, both men and women, and also children: a great medley. He sat with me a while ago and he insisted that I should become like a little child so that I could join his crowd." Here Bali laughed again. "Think of Bali becoming like a simple child! Went so far as to say I should be born again, he even visited the devil on the salt marsh and tried to make him over into one of his gang. Think of the devil going to church and prattling his prayers humbly with the people who have become children." The idea seemed to amuse Bali greatly and he laughed immoderately." Why the gospel talker is better fitted to hunt the tiger. Now, Kim the gospel talker in matters of philosophy may not agree with you or me but I think he is a man who would put up a splendid fight if pushed to a corner, and I love a brave man. I understand that he and the magistrate had a misunderstanding and the magistrate tried to straighten the matter out with the paddle, which, by the way, is an excellent short-cut to making your neighbor think as you do; just put him under the paddle, that will fetch him; he will generally think as you do as long as he smarts. I understand, however, the gospel talker did not agree with the magistrate even after that gentle father of the people had petted and caressed him till he was really hypnotized. Strange, isn't it, that the fellow who agrees with you is a good chap while the fellow who disagrees is anything but good? I, rather suspect that was the great sin of the gigantic gospeller. It seems that even after the interview his independence of ideas still exasperates the magistrate. Now it is so seldom that such a sturdy disagreement occurs that I have a pretty warm feeling for the gospel talker."

"I hate him!" exclaimed Mr. Cho in a fervor of exasperation. "I hate him, I wish he was dead, I say a thousand times dead!" and he sprang to his feet with a fury that was astonishing for one so small.

Bali looked at him with an air of shocked surprise, and said:

"I am exceedingly sorry to have trespassed upon your feelings in mentioning to you a man against whom you have such strong resentment. Your present agitation would lead me to infer that you had been greatly wronged by him. Now, we shall never again call up his name. I am

profoundly sorry to have so rudely treated my guest;" He spoke in a voice of soothing dignity as if he had been addressing a fretful child. "No," he repeated, "we will never mention his name again."

Mr. Cho was irritated by the voice, but its deep bass drawl was in such contrast to his own angry screech that he sat down somewhat abashed. It was evident that Bali was not ready to commit a crime at least against Mr. Kim, and Mr. Cho soon left with rage filling his breast but scarcely knowing how to give vent to it. When he departed, Bali again thanked him for his great kindness in the gift, and expressed a wish that a friendship so happily begun would continue in its ideal disinterested character till they, one or both, should have entered the yellow valley.

Mr. Cho made no audible reply, but within his rage knew no bounds, and while on the way home he wondered much what was the real character of the man of whom he had heard so many rumors. He seemed to know all about his affairs and was insistent that the way of the righteous was the best and refused to fall into his plan of revenge. Could it be that the gospel talker had indeed exerted his insidious influence upon the outlaw? That he was a financial loser without returns also galled him not a little. "If I could get acquainted with members of his gang," he thought, and the reflection stopped him in the middle of the road. He stood a long time looking at his feet, lost in his new purpose. "l will do it," said he aloud, and started back for the town.

It was not difficult for Mr. Cho to find the men whom be sought, nor was it difficult for him to persuade them with a generous gift, and a promise of much more, to agree to rid the country of the hated gospel talker.

The gang of toughs had heard considerable regarding Mr. Kim but had never concerned themselves about him, after they learned that he had no money, and did not seek their harm, but when it came to a matter of business they could as well interest themselves in him as any one else. They wanted to know what they were going to do with him. Mr. Cho had angrily stated that he did not know nor did he care only that they must rid the country of him and bring proofs that they had done so.

They had heard that he was a very mild mannered man and they thought it might be managed without trouble.

When Mr. Cho returned home he was in high spirits. He had set loose a gang of men on the heels of the man whom he hated, who would not leave his tracks till they had destroyed him.

Soon after these events Mr. Kim noticed strange men sitting in his services, men whom no one seemed to know. They would sit till the services were ready to close and then would go out and linger about with

seemingly no purpose, but as there were many who would begin visiting the church in that manner and then stand aloof from any approach he thought little of it, till finally he discovered that the same men appeared at different places and were compelled to make long rapid journeys in order to do so

It was on one or these journeys that Mr. Kim was made acquainted with the strange character of the robber chief. He had been out all day attending service in a certain village and was returning to Standing Stone where he had made his head-quarters for some time. He was light hearted; he could not be otherwise, both his faith and his temperament forbade it. Whispers of coming evil had reached his ears, and the men who had so frequently followed his footsteps had been pointed out to him as a sinister sign, but in a land where dangers were common and most men's hearts were big with fear, Mr. Kim knew no fear. On his way home on this particular night the road led through a long stretch of moor land. Here and there was a mound crowned with a cluster of low bushes and at great intervals stunted trees stretched their naked withered limbs to bathe in the bright moonlight. Half way across the plain was a deep gully worn into the soil by the feet of many generations of travelers. The ridges on both sides were lined with shrubs. Mr. Kim on reaching this point strode rapidly into the deep shadows of the ravine with no thought of danger. He had hardly reached the center when footsteps echoed behind him and at the same time dark shadows crowded the narrow gully in front. He stood still in his tracks and threw a hurried glance at the approaching shadows and then up-wards at the bank on both sides of the path. The soil was soft and the rainy seasons had worn them away so that the top, which had been supported by the roots of underbrush, hung out beyond the batik and seemed on the point of toppling over into the gully twenty feet beneath.

With a sense of impending danger Mr. Kim sprang up the bank and seized the tops of overhanging bushes while at the same moment his assailants from both directions met in the path he had left. They gave an exclamation of surprise at the agility of the huge figure who now stood fifteen feet above their heads, and immediately started up the steep bank in pursuit. Mr. Kim lifted himself from the ground and swung his feet upward as an acrobat would over a vaulting pole. In a moment he would have been beyond his assailants, when suddenly the whole over-hanging bank for many yards in both directions with tons of earth gave way and hurled itself into the road carrying Mr. Kim with it and overwhelming his pursuers in its descent. For a moment there were cries and imprecations. A dozen arms and legs contended with loose soil, sod, and bushes, while their owners struggled half buried under the mass. When Mr. Kim came to

his senses a pair of unsandaled feet were playing a tattoo upon his ribs while the owner's head and shoulders were buried in the soil. Mr. Kim seized him by the legs and dragged him out and left him coughing and spitting while he turned his attention to other half buried knaves. Two of his assailants had fared better and were sitting in the middle of the road stupid with the shock of their fall. Soon the four buried men were dragged out and lay upon the road coughing, gasping, with many a lugubrious groan. Their recovery was rapid and in a few minutes they were all on their feet following Mr. Kim out of the gully into the bright moonlight of the open road beyond. Excepting a brief word in reply to Mr. Kim's question now and then as to how they fared there was nothing said. The knaves seemed quite cowed by their efforts till they reached the open moor land and then their spirits returned and they engaged in low whispers just beyond Mr. Kim's hearing, who recognized their sinister purpose and turned to confront them. "See here, stranger," said one of the men as he stepped in the front of his companions. "You may think we ought to be grateful for being pulled out of the heap of dirt, but we don't like the way you did it. You dragged us out by the feet, and that was an insult. Then, too, what business had you in rushing up the bank and sprawling around like a turtle and pulling the hill down upon us? A hog could have done as well. We have lost our hats, sandals, pipes and nearly every-thing else. What do you mean by attacking us on the public highway? It has come to a great pass when peaceful citizens walking through the country must be attacked by such fiends as you are. We won't stand it! we won't! I tell you we won't!" and the man bristled with fury while his companions gathered about Mr. Kim with faces of menace. It was an open piece of moor land and they surrounded him like so many wolves to pull down a stag, and the preacher understood his peril. At this juncture Mr. Kim threw back his head and laughed long and loud as though convulsed with wild uncontrollable mirth. So sudden, so unexpected was this burst of seeming merriment that the men paused in their tracks and responded with foolish grins. Mr. Kim seemed to control himself with difficulty and after looking from face to face went off into another fit of laughter so hearty and impelling that the highwaymen joined him. He again struggled to control himself and when after wiping his eyes a moment he abandoned himself to another convulsion of mirth it was hard to tell whether he or his companions were the most hilarious. He sat down on a low mound, and as if by common impulse they squatted about him, still grinning from the effects of their recent mirth.

"That was a good joke," said Mr. Kim, and seemed on the point of again losing himself in laughter, then checking himself said:

"Injure any one? Listen. I will tell you a story. Years ago in my distant home a tiger came into one of my neighbors' yards at night, while my neighbor was sleeping on a mat in front of his door, and the tiger carried him off. The next day we found a few bones of our neighbor, and his widow wept over them, but I was angry, furious that the brute had dared to enter our town and bring us so much trouble, so the next day I took my spear and tracked the tiger to a ledge of rocks. Like a coward he was. When he saw me coming, he crawled as far as he could under the ledge like a whipped dog. I called to him and shouted defiance at him. I hurled a stone at his head. The aim was good and brought the brute to the edge of the rocks lashing the ground with his tail, growling and furious. In a moment he had launched himself in the air and came like a thunderbolt of fury. My nerve was as cool as if I were spearing a rabbit. A white spot underneath gave me my aim. and the butt of the spear touched the ground. The angle of the spear was not perfect and it snapped in the middle, but the sharp point had done its work. It had entered the underside, passed through, breaking the spine, and the brute rolled down the hill beyond me. I carried home a deep cut from the shoulder to the wrist and also the tiger's skin. Now let me truly say that it was the only time that I ever planned mischief in the spirit of anger for any living thing."

While Mr. Kim was telling his tale those nearest him shrank away from his burly form.

"The fact is," he continued, "I have another mission the opposite of violence, and I am here to fill the lives of people who will hear me with something better than houses and lands." Mr. Kim launched forth with great energy with his gospel story till one among them began lo ask questions. It was a signal for impatience on the part of the man who had first been aggressive. At that moment Mr. Kim glanced up over the heads of his assailants and discovered the huge form of Bali calmly looking over the group of men in front of him. Simultaneously the group of knaves noticed him and sprang to their feet with an exclamation of surprise. The new comer gazed at the men about him as they came each and all obsequiously bowing at his feet. They were evidently greatly embarrassed and their confusion grew each moment as Bali said nothing but silently observed them.

"We just happened along," the leader said, "and we ran across him. We did'nt have time to tell you." "You know," one whined, "we have not had anything of late. You haven't given your consent, and yet we have to eat."

Without replying, Bali pointed down in the direction the road led out across the moor land. "Yae," said the spokesman, and the six men

shuffled off. Bali stood statue-like in the moonlight, his face turned upon his departing companions in crime, his whole attitude commanding, imperious. Mr. Kim gazed at him in astonishment. How huge he seemed in the moonlight! What astonishing power over men! Directly he turned sharply upon Mr. Kim and the latter rose to his feet.

"Didn't think you would do it," said Bali. "I thought you would play a better part. What, you no better than the rest, play the part of a coward and run? You play a trick of a buffoon to keep these dogs from your throat? You who acted so bold a part with a mountain tiger?" and a sneer curled Bali's lip. "If the branches had not given way you would have carried your heavy carcase to a place of safety like any other coward. Ah! a piece of that moral sentiment inherited from our race: not a coward, eh? just sentiment, one that your religion promises to cure but has not yet cured it in the preacher. How many generations think you it will take to get this sentiment rooted out?"

"And you stood by and watched them attack me?" asked the preacher quietly. "I infer that you saw them do it. Such consent on your part comports strangely with your attitude toward the miscreants just now. I don't understand."

"Who has asked you to understand?" Bali replied. "Stupidity and cowardice always go together. I am privileged to walk moonlight nights without question if I choose."

The two men stood a moment, their eyes on a level. The robber chief aggressive and threatening, and no chill of fear in the heart of the preacher. In the quiet look the robber saw courage that matched his own, and the irritation slipped from his voice as he said:

"How is it? you appear to fear, and yet you say you are not afraid?"

"Fear the tiger?" Mr. Kim replied slowly, "no, I fear him not. Fear men? There is not a man, woman or child that I don't fear, yes I fear them greatly."

"You are mocking me," said Bali sternly.

" 'Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones to offend, it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck and he be cast in the sea.' You do not understand us because you do not know the spirit of the Master whom I serve. Fear men? yes, I fear greatly—but to die—no, I fear it not."

"Ordinarily I should say you were a bit crazy. Judge I not rightly that your dreams have turned your balance?"

"Strange, is'nt it," Mr. Kim replied, "that the man who agrees with you and speaks in terms with which you are familiar is the sane man while the one who has another language is crazy. You have an abhorrence of

cowardice, and it seems to be your religion, and it is hard for me to understand it. I have a love for men, which is a large part of my religion, and you do not understand it. For me to submit to violence is from your view cowardice, and for you to administer violence is bravery from your standpoint, but from mine it is cowardice. I once thought much as you do, but now I have learned that to suffer violence without returning a blow may be courage of a rugged type."

"Of a truth," replied Bali, "I believe you are crazy."

Without replying Mr. Kim swung into the street in the direction taken by the robber band and Bali strode at his side.

## CHAPTER XX. AN ENCHANTED RIVER.

The annual rainy season had burst upon the country with unusual severity, razing to the ground the homes of many people. In the town of Standing Stone the nights were made musical with the falling of compound walls, while these sounds were occasionally punctured by the collapse of a tiled roof or a mud hut. The victims of such disaster would be dug from the debris by their neighbors; some escaping with their lives while others went out with the flood. Such was the spirit of the time that these disasters were viewed with nonchalance. "Sorry," they said, "but what could be done during such a time as that."

A chain of precipitous mountains half encircled the town. At its base a stream had worn a deep channel, so deep that an ordinary house placed in the bed of the stream would find its roof many feet below the top of the embankment. The town had long been jealous of the space occupied by the river, so houses crowded its banks till some of them had been jostled out over the water so far that half stood there on long stilts. Peering down into the flood their backs seemed broken and their joints dislocated.

Each day and each night through the years of the past the people had listened to the murmur of the water and were contented. But during the last few days this stream had been a thundering torrent and on this particular day it had been rising from early morning and had reached a point far above that known by any living man. The people trooped out to See the river. Old men shook their heads dubiously. But then, old men, when their legs become feeble, always shake their heads at threatening danger.

This was a night for the Christians to gather, and Mr. Kim had attempted to preach to the dozen faithful members who had braved the

storm. The noise of the rain drowned his voice and after a few moments of futile effort he sat down on the mat below the pulpit and joined them in listening to the storm. At times it seemed as though the church was located beneath a waterfall and the little company turned its attention to the roar with a feeling of awe, and they huddled closer together for companionship. Suddenly there was a shock as though some mighty force had seized the house by the four corners and picked it from its foundation and shook it. A bundle of dust-laden herbs was hurled from a shelf upon the heads of the company. Then the house came to a stand and the storm roared on.

"What was that?" they asked each other with scared faces. "An earthquake," ventured Mr. Kim. "An earthquake?" repeated several voices with a quaver of fear, and their faces whitened in the uncertain light.

On the east side of the building the rain was driven up under the eaves and a flood swept down over the mud walls. As the water soaked through the wall it gradually darkened in the lamp light, and a bit of plaster crumbled off. Then a tiny stream crept in and hastily slipped out of sight in the dry earth of the floor. A few moments later they were startled to hear the plaster fall from the outside of the wall. Mr. Kim placed his hand against the plaster where it had darkened the most and when he removed it a sheet of mud fell inward leaving the lath bare like so many grinning teeth. The candle flared before the wind and the dark night looked hungrily in. The little company narrowed their circle and looked at the dripping wall apprehensively.

Suddenly there was a rattling at the door, and a persistence in it that raised it out of the general hubbub and gave the sound a personality. Some one lifted the catch and a man from a neighboring town stumbled in, the water streaming from his oiled paper coat, which had been torn to shreds by the wind. The man stood a moment shivering at the door.

"Oh!" cried some one, "It is farmer Yi."

"Where did you come from, and how did you get here?" was asked by a chorus of voices.

"Get here?" he replied, looking a moment at the group and turning a ruthful glance at his wet suit. "Have traveled the road for fifty years, that is how I got here. Came to hear the preacher of course. What did you come for?" he asked taking the company in at a glance. "Perhaps you want to know if it rains. Perhaps you want to know if it blows on the top of the cliff. Blows? I lay down and crawled over the pass, nor did I breathe till I got half way down the mountain."

"But the river, man, the river. How did you cross the river?" they asked again.

"River," he repeated slowly and a wondering look came into his

eyes. "Why, I did not think of that. Why, yes, I walked across the usual stepping stones."

"What!" one shouted, "I saw the river just before dark and it was chafing its banks nearly to the top, fifteen feet above the stepping stones. Why, man, you didn't come from home tonight. "But I did," stoutly affirmed the farmer, "and there is no more water in the river than there is in May. Dry, I say, dryer than is usual during a drought." The company looked at the man and into each other's faces uneasily. Some one touched his forehead significantly. Others nodded their heads. The storm had been too much for the poor farmer.

Mr. Kim had been silent, now looking at the hole in the wall where the stream increased in size, then back at the late comer.

The farmer wrung out his clothes the best he could and sat down near the door that he might not wet the mat on the floor.

Some present began to chaff him, saying that he had become lost in the storm while wandering about the town. Probably he had crossed nothing greater than an open sewer. It was evident, they said, that he had not come from home and was really trying to hoodwink the company. Such undignified behavior ill-became a man who has the name of being a full member of the Church.

"Sewer," said the farmer, "Not three hours ago I watered my ox, and fed him boiled beans and chaff. If you believe it not go ask the ox. As you all know, my ox lives with me on the other side of the river. I was on that side three hours ago. I am now on this side. I can't fly, there are no bridges, nor can I swim. Figure it out yourself."

Mr. Kim got up and pulled off his coat. "Going out," he said simply to the surprised look of enquiry, and he glanced doubtfully at the farmer. "Sure, find it with my eyes shut," said the latter, and he lead the way into the driving storm.

The farmer's instinct of direction was unerring. He took Mr. Kim's hand and fifteen minutes later they were feeling their way down the long winding path that led into the deep river-bed. They splashed through water half way to their knees, climbed the opposite bank. A flash of lightning lit up the town, showing the shallow stream, the high banks and the storm-beaten roofs or the houses. They again felt their way down through the river-bed and back to the waiting company. On hearing confirmation of the farmer's statement, the group of men stared at each other and listened to the increased thunder of the storm.

"What is it?" one asked, pushing his frightened face close up to Mr. Kim. "Don't know," was the reply. "I know," said the man, "It is the Water Devil." He arose and edged toward the door. "Sorry I came," he added,

"The Water Devil is mad because there arc Christians in town. I only came to Church last Sunday and just a sight-seer, just a sight-seer," he mumbled, "that is all, just a sight-seer." He went as far as the door and looked out at the howling storm, shuddered, and came back to the company and trimmed the candle and sat down close among the group.

Finally members of the group began telling stories of great storms of previous years. According to those traditions there was once a time when the river overflowed its banks and brought disaster to the houses along its margin. A narrator took up the tale and before he had finished the whole town had been swept away, but the people had been saved by the simple appearance of a dragon. "You haven't outgrown those childish tales?" asked Mr. Kim. The man looked abashed al his pastor's glance of disapproval.

"Fool I was to join company with men who so easily despise the teaching of a hundred generations," said the man who had declared the storm was the work of the Water Devil. "If human testimony is of value then surely the existence of the Dragon, the Water Devil, Ghosts and Spirits of the hills is an established fact. Multitudes have seen them, been cursed by them and blessed by them. Who are you to defy them? You take heavy responsibility when you imperil the people of this town with your atheism." The man again arose and went to the door, only to return and take refuge close to the center of the group.

After a long silence the farmer ventured to explain. "You see," said he, "water comes from holes in the ground. Our limestone mountains are perforated with holes, and streams that are almost rivers in size flow beneath these mountains. Now if water can come out of the mountains as rivers why can not rivers return to the mountains? I am sorry our friend here has such an ancient brain. This is an age of science and reason, and also of revelation. Why, man," said he, and his words sounded much like the discourse of Mr. Kim, "there are square miles of gold, and copper, and iron, and coal under the soil of our wonderfully rich country but you and I live in rags and starve because of the traditions of our fathers, the idle tales of the Dragon, Water Devil and a multitude of other spirits. No, sir, I had rather believe in God, possess a clean conscience and have the privilege of digging into every mound and mountain without fear of wounding devils or ghosts. Then may I have wherewith to cover my nakedness, satisfy my hunger, to honor my God. Now my explanation of this strange phenomenon is that the shock you heard earlier in the evening was not an earthquake at all. It was a hole opening up in the mountain, and the river is being lost."

"Ah!" exclaimed the previous speaker, with a long drawl of dissent.

"Who but the Water Devil could open the hole in the mountain? Tell me that now, who—" At that moment a sharp zigzag of lightning and a crash of thunder stopped the debate. Suddenly a distant roar assailed the town as if all the waters of centuries were bellowing down this valley. The company listened with mouths agape. With the roar was a high shrill note, an eager whining sound, like the voice of many wild things seeking their prey. The recent tumult of storm was lost in this new uproar.

There was an instant of stupefaction and then Mr. Kim awoke and with a bound was at the door. The church was on a much higher elevation than most of the town, and from the door an open space could be seen far up the valley. A flash of lightning revealed a sight which for a moment fixed him where he stood. Far up the valley a mass of water was roaring upon the town. On its crest were houses, trees, and a great mass of debris; they were hurled about in the wildest fury. Mr. Kim called to his friends.

"For your life," he shouted. "Out of this; Run!"

He ran for the elevation beyond the church, with the farmer at his heels. The two men driven by fright paused not till they were far beyond the reach of the flood. Finding themselves among a crowd of people who were looking toward the river and moving in that direction they faced about. Twilight was breaking through the darkness, revealing to their astonished eyes nature in wild destruction. There were no falling of buildings, for they were picked up and hurled bodily heavenward, and crumbling to pieces in seeming mid-air, spread out like sand from a sieve. People were rapidly gathering from that portion of the town located above the reach of the flood. There was no outcry. Amazed terror had sealed their lips. The sight of this fear-stricken people stirred Mr. Kim to action. He remembered the friends left in the little church. His eye sought the place where it stood. There it was half submerged, bravely buffeting the flood, but swaying, and every moment on the point of going to pieces. Other buildings formed a line in the direction of the on-coming flood, and offers a partial protection. Yet they staggered and swayed at every fresh impact and occasionally the heavy tiled roof would slip into the water and the timbers of the building being let loose would spring into the air and then rush away with the flood. At that moment a man was seen riding by on a mass of wreckage; he may have called for help, but no voice could be heard above the noise of the flood. The sight sent Mr. Kim on the run to the water's edge. He plunged in to the stream with the purpose of reaching the church for the rescue of his friends. Immediately he was to his shoulders in water and was in imminent danger of being swept out into the flood. With the aid of the farmer he returned to the bank. Tongues that had been paralyzed by the enormity or the disaster were now let loose. There

was shouting and crying. A woman was pulling her hair out in handfuls and wailing at the top or her voice. Her home had gone, she only had escaped. Mr. Kim looked from one to another, then out to the buildings still standing above the reach of the flood, and then his eyes rested for an instant upon the people who were crowding the roofs. He motioned to the farmer, they ran in that direction. Before reaching that point he paused and again his eyes searched the river. To the right and some distance beyond where he stood was the imposing roof of the most pretentious house of the town, the home of Mr. Cho, the author of all his troubles. The house was under water nearly to the eaves. A curve in the bank partially deflected the current, or that building and others in the immediate vicinity would have been carried away with the first onslaught of the flood. On reaching the line of houses covered with people he called for a rope. Many looked at him with faces of helpless inquiry. His head was nearly even with the eaves. "A rope!" he bellowed. He ran the length of the short street calling for a rope and returning grew frantic at the stupid stares he received. A pair of legs were dangling from a roof while their owner gazed at the flood. Mr. Kim seized them and pulled the owner down, shook the man, and bellowed for a rope. The man gasped and said he had none. Mr. Kim in exasperation seized the fellow by an arm and one leg and with a mighty heave flung him to the ridge of the roof. "A rope," he again shouted, some one bring a rope!" There was a stir at the place where the man had landed on the roof and some one slid to the ground and entered a house. Presently he returned with a long rope used by farmers in tethering cattle. Mr. Kim and the farmer without a word ran back to the bank opposite the house which held his friends, while a crowd followed at their heels. He hastily tied the rope about his waist and giving a few directions to the farmer placed the other end in his hands and struck out into the stream. When he reached the corner of the building he was flung up against it with violence. The shock stunned him for a moment and he was dragged under but coming to the the surface he seized the post that supported the front of the building and snubbed the end of the rope there; he then worked himself inside. His companions of the night were standing shoulder deep in water and nearly dead with fright. They responded at his call and all moved at once. As they approached the door he chose one and forced the others back, shaking one and choking another till they submitted to his direction. They worked their way ashore by clinging to the rope one by one. Mr. Kim came last with the rope around his waist. On reaching the bank he was besieged by the multitude for aid.

"That house, there!" called a woman pointing to a thatched building rapidly going to pieces, "My family is there, sir, save them, oh,

sir, save them!"

"In that building there!" called another, "As you love your father, sir, save mine! Ah-a-a! there it goes! It's breaking up, gone!" he screamed, as the building toppled over and hastened off in a wild race down the stream.

He ran opposite the half submerged houses with their tiled roofs where lived the man who so eagerly sought his life. The buildings on the outer fringe were rapidly going to pieces, while the inner circle was also being weakened as the current tore off huge flakes of lath and plaster. Holes could be seen through the rain covered walls into the dark interior of the whole line of buildings. At the farther end of the row of buildings and somewhat less exposed to the fury of the torrent was the home Mr. Kim sought. The people now understood his purpose and were eager to help. More rope appeared at the feet of Mr. Kim, and uniting it with the other, eager hands seized it, and shout was added to shout as all tried to direct affairs and all getting in the way one of another. Mr. Kim paid no heed to the uproar of voices and the multitude of suggestions and commands. He measured the rope with his arms as he hastily coiled it on the bank. He had a purpose, spurred on by a feeling that none there could have understood. He chose a dozen sturdy men from the crowd and placed one end of the rope in their hands and tying the other about his waist moved quickly into the stream. Deep holes in the water, funnel-like, whirled about him, one here, another there, and while one disappeared new ones took their places in the mad rush. He glanced back at the rope. A score of self-appointed men had run it out on the shore and were holding it.

How fast he sped toward the nearest building. A massive tiled roof held the building in place which served as a partial protection to the buildings below. He was swept past it and the current carried him to the opposite side; he attempted to seize the projection of roof timbers but failed. The farmer seeing his plight, called for help and with more zeal than prudence, they pulled him ashore; so that his head was under the flood more than half the time. For several moments he lay on the bank exhausted. Suddenly a great shout from the watchers brought him to his feet. The house was going to pieces, one corner had been undermined, dislodging a corer post, and half the roof toppled over; then the whole structure sank from sight under the enormous weight of tiles. Suddenly the roof timbers of the sinking house, relieved of the weight of tiles, shot to the surface; some of them sprang end-wise against the adjoining house and were held there by the mass of wreckage beneath. That building swayed under the impact and an avalanche of earth and tiles slid into the river. Mr. Kim saw his chance at a glance and slipped into the water and

made for the mass of wreckage under the eaves of the tottering building. At that moment he was startled by a huge splash at his side, and turning his head looked into the face of the man called the Devil. He was swimming with a mighty stroke without the aid of a shore-line.

"Go back," shouted Mr. Kim. "Take the rope and go back. It will be death, man, go back!" For reply the creature parted his lips in a dauntless smile and in an instant he had shot past the preacher, he grasped a projecting timber of wreckage, and climbed to the roof above and stood waiting for Mr. Kim. Immediately they stood side by side on the ridge of the tiled roof. Mr. Kim looked his companion over.

"What did you do it for?" he shouted, pointing to the boiling flood and back at the trembling building beneath them. "It is death, sir, don't you know it is death? Take the rope and go back." Mr. Kim took him by the shoulder and shook him. "You still have a chance, back!" be commanded.

The hermit opened his mouth, and for a moment his voice bellowed deep in his chest, and with a motion of deep disdain at the flood he said, "A hundred li in that is but a morning swim. Did I not know where you were? I have raced the flood many a mile to be with you. Death? Why, man, I am here to give my life for the man whose lips speak kind words." For a moment Mr. Kim looked into the face so ugly, so ingenious, and forgot the river, the falling houses and the drowning people; a choking sensation seized his throat, then he turned and bounded to the next roof, with the hermit at his heels. At the farther end of the row of buildings was the home of Mr. Cho. Mr. Kim remembered the prison, the cruel beatings, the bitter taunts, he also remembered a temptation that crossed his mind at the first sight of the beleaguered house that morning, and in a panic of self condemnation he sped for the house of his enemy. When he and the hermit stepped upon the roof it shook beneath their tread. He hastened to the gable at the farther end and those holding the rope on shore kept pace with him. He motioned the men on shore to hold steady; they stood fast as the native rock. Down over the gable he slid till he was waist deep in the water. In this position he was hid from view on shore. His face came to the level of the top of a window that had been covered with slats; it was the window through which he once looked, and had so nearly cost him his life. He looked at the slats in dismay, then he seized one and bracing his feet against the wall flung himself backward with abandon. It gave away with a crash and he fell back into the water. The shock loosened a tile from over head. In falling it struck him on the head and, half stunned, he again climbed up the slats. This time he was more cautious and after a moment's struggle he removed another, then another; soon he was able to

crawl through the aperture. There was no sign of life and when he lowered himself to the floor he was in water to his neck. With a shock of disappointment and keen regret he recognized what must have happened. Mr. Cho was a small man not reaching to his shoulders; he must have drowned, and half unconscious of the act, Mr. Kim waded about the room reaching out into the corners with his foot expecting to confirm his fears. The room was dark except the dim light that struggled through the opening Mr. Kim had made. He called aloud, then thought how foolish it was.

That part of the house was an ell from the main building and had only two rooms connected by a low door, which in the warm season of the year would naturally be left open. These were the sleeping quarters of the family and the place to which Mr. Cho had withdrawn since he had driven Martha from his doors, It was slightly less exposed to the violence of the flood than the rest of the house. All this Mr. Kim knew.

As he moved about the room his hand passed through the opening into the other apartment. Without a moment's hesitation he plunged beneath the surface and came up on the other side of the door. A scream greeted him as he flung the water from his head. He looked hastily about, but could see nothing but bits of floating furniture that rocked here and there from the commotion he had stirred on plunging into the room. A dim light filtered between the cornstock lath the length of the room where the plaster had been removed from the wall. Following the sound Mr. Kim raised his eyes to the roof. On the farther end of the room, on the top of a shelf lay a man looking out at Mr. Kim with eyes filled with terror. When Mr. Kim approached him he screamed and flattened himself against the wall.

"Afraid of me!" cried Mr. Kim. "I am here to save you, Mr. Cho. Come now, let us out of this."

At the sound of Mr. Kim's voice the little man half raised himself on his elbow and gazed intently at his visitor, "Why it's a man," he gasped, "But you came out of the water."

"Come, come," said Mr. Kim, "Don't you see the house is falling.

To make this narrative plain it will be necessary for the reader to enter the home of Mr. Cho the evening before the flood.

For some time Bali had been a frequent visitor of Mr. Cho. The latter's plans of revenge on the Christian community contemplated the service of Bali.

Considerable money had exchanged hands and Mr. Cho was in a chronic state of exasperation that the gigantic outlaw had not really committed himself to the task of destroying the hated preacher.

On this particular night the robber took refuge from the storm under the roof of Mr. Cho. Since driving Martha from his door the little man had grown more morose and irritable than ever. Most of his servants left him from sheer aversion of a man of such irritable temper. He scorned the aversion of his servants and neighbors. It was an acknowledgment that they all feared him. That was his consolation.

Bali was the only man who dared to treat him with familiarity, indeed he never felt so small and of so little account as when listening to the mocking voice of this redoubtable enemy of the magistrates. The latter always addressed the little man in a spirit of mocking raillery; it suited his temper to prod and puncture the vanity of his host. This whimsical habit was stimulated by the knowledge of the other's delight in humbling and terrorizing others.

On this night Mr. Cho welcomed the huge robber. He was not sure that his visitor had not come to make another demand on him for some unholy deed for which he had already been paid two or three times, but it was a time when he did not want to be left alone. During the early part of the evening he had called for his servants, but they were not to be found. Muttering dire revenge when next he could lay hands upon them, he withdrew to the inner quarters and lighting extra candles trimmed them till they burned up brightly, then sat down to listen to the storm.

When Bali knocked, he met him with real pleasure in his little heart though he covered his feelings with an imperturbable face. Bali laid off his oiled coat kicked off his wet sandals at the door, and mopping his wet face with a huge cloth he drew from his sleeve, took the proffered seat, the seat of honor over the fire-place. He smiled at the unwonted courtesy on the part of his host; it presaged a request to execute some plan of cupidity for the humiliation of others.

"Well, well," was Bali's first remark, "Fearful storm for any one to be in to-night. Think of a man wandering homeless in such a storm. Bad wouldn't it be, eh? Hard enough

on a man however strong he might be. It made me pant to breast that wind. Ah, a jolly breeze it is!" His host nodded his appreciation. "Yes," continued, Bali, "Hard on a rough chap like me, but what would a weak little woman do in this storm, eh? one who had lived in silks and sat at ease all her life; one for instance who had lived all her married life under the loving protection of an indulgent husband. I have no doubt that there is one such daintily clad woman, a mere lass, with a pretty face, offering her own frail body to shield her sweet faced baby from this cursed storm. But then, she despised her husband's unselfish love and in sheer wantonness left his roof, eh," he added after a pause looking solemnly at Mr. Cho. "To

ignore such a huzzy or even to turn her from the door would be just and right in every way. It could but inspire a feeling of contented satisfaction in the gentle heart of the much injured husband. Yes, my dear sir," he continued musingly, "the feeling of revenge must be sweet to know that the helpless little thing is staggering about in this storm trying to protect her baby, her silks torn and blackened with mud; hungry and nothing to feed the crying baby; perhaps anon sitting beside the storm-swept road in helpless misery. Wives must obey, and the satisfaction of having made an example of the little huzzy must make the home of that husband cheery this stormy night," and Bali glanced at the second lighted candle.

"Stop your noise," shouted Mr. Cho, his face black with wrath, "What business have you talking of my—" Here he paused, for it had not been long since he had in great wrath cursed the mocking Bali for hinting that he now had a wife.

"Eh?" said Bali in an assumed wonder, "You did not finish your sentence. I do not wonder your wrath is kindled against this unfortunate lady. You have my sympathy. She was gentle and gracious till the neighbors called her the queen of the country, and yet she was that naughty as to run counter to your wishes. Queer how so gentle a breast could carry so much evil. Notwithstanding all this I hope she is under shelter to-night. Yet I would not want to appear disloyal to you, my friend, in wishing her that shelter. I do not blame you for driving her out when the whole country-side wondered how such a fiend as you could get so virtuous and glorious a woman. To call her glorious and you a fiend was bad and she ought to starve by the wayside. No doubt she ought to perish if she did not think just exactly as her all-wise husband thought; did she not bow in the corner and declare her love to her maker just exactly as her husband thought best, or if she neglected to worship the devil that had inspired her husband to throttle a man, she ought to be punished. Sure, she ought to have prayed to you and not to God. Such an almighty creature are you that you ought with the aid of that gentle, refined heart of yours to satisfy her hungry soul for love and protection. Any one could see even on the day you drove her forth that you were unselfish and good. Her gaping wounds proclaimed to the neighbors your love for her."

Experience had taught Mr. Cho that resentment and protest only inspired Bali to torture him farther, so he writhed on his mat in impotent rage .

" Yes," Bali mused while watching his host out of the corner of his eye, "Martha and baby would like to rest their weary heads on that husband's protecting breast to-night. Why, man," he added leaning forward and tapping his host on the knee, "Do you know that a delicate

woman like Martha would drown out in this storm as surely as she would had you thrown her in the river."

"Drop it," shouted the little man jumping to his feet and flourishing a fan over his head as if it had been an executioner's axe.

"Ah," interrupted Bali, soothingly, "You seem unwell, my friend; I fear the storm has got on your nerves. What a pity Madam Cho is not here to—."

A distant roar choked the words in Bali's throat. Bali sprung to the door and listened attentively, but could see nothing but blackness. A flash of lightning cut the darkness but he could see only the roofs of the sleeping town. A moment later there was a crash and the cries of men mingled with the turmoil or flood. The outer buildings of the Cho compound crumbled at the first onslaught. The central structure, covered with many tons or earth and tiles, and partially protected by its situation on higher ground stood but shook

like a reed in the flood. The door was wrung from Bali's grasp and hurled away in the darkness, the room immediately filled as would a vessel that had been thrust beneath the surface. Mr. Cho was fairly carried across the room, and the water plunged through the door of the adjoining room and carried the door with it. Bali steadied himself by placing his hand against the wall. When he removed his hand the plaster fell off and slid away in the whirling current. The room filled with frightful rapidity.

Mr. Cho cried out in wild fear, "Bali, help, I am drowning!"

Bali reached his long arms out in the darkness and lifted the little man, who was indeed already choking, his mouth barely above the water, which was rapidly deepening. Bali held him for a moment in his giant arms then thrust him as he would a wet garment on top of a long shelf that ran lengthwise with the building. There he lay, shivering with fear and occasionally calling to Bali for help.

The water had reached to Bali's shoulders and fearing that he would himself be drowned as a rat in a hole he made his way to the door but found the water above the top of the low entrance, and to pass out would require him to dive beneath and then work his way beyond the long eaves of the house before he could come to the surface. In the mean time where might the current carry him, and what of Mr. Cho, for he had no idea of deserting the man to his fate without first making a struggle to save him. He took note of the height of water as it rested on the point of his shoulders. He waited to see if it was still rising, and had time to reflect on the cause of the flood. He knew the stream every foot to its head waters; there was no dam nor any kind of obstruction its whole length. Perhaps no man in the land was as little the victim of superstition as was Bali, yet he

shivered at the thought of the strange phenomenon; it seemed causeless, uncanny.

Mr. Cho still called for help. "Shut up!" Bali commanded roughly. "Close your mouth or I will choke the life out of you," and he made his way across the room in the dark and placed his broad hand over the mouth of the frightened man. "I will kill you, you vermin, if you don't stop that racket," he shouted. "Use your brain, you have wit enough; think how we are to get out of this."

Soon the blackness within was relieved by a thin streak of light running the length of the room. It gave Bali an idea and he pulled off the plaster and a strip of cornstock lath from the wall. The light was sufficient for Bali and Mr. Cho to see each other. Instead of allaying the small man's fears the sight of the water only revealed to him their desperate situation. Bali also took note of the alarming manner in which the house shook and swayed under the battering of the river. He knew that unless the water immediately subsided the building must collapse. He could not estimate when that would be, as he had not the slightest idea of the cause of the flood.

He turned quickly to Mr. Cho whose face was blue with fear. "Come, now," said Bali, "You must plunge into the water and out of your own door and swim for it."

"But I can't," he wailed, "I can't swim, indeed I can't."

"Can't," repeated Bali with scorn, "You know the way well enough. You have traveled it many years; you drove your wife out of ii, now go yourself." Bali seized him as if to hurl him into the water, while Mr. Cho begged piteously and clung to his huge arm. "I can't," he whispered, "mercy, I can't!"

With an imprecation of disgust, Bali thrust the man back on the shelf. "Drown! a rat like you ought to drown. What, a thing like you drown and die like other men? A coward should be destroyed as you would destroy any other vermin." He stood a moment looking at the man, still hesitating to leave him.

"Ah-a," he drawled, assuming the old tone of mockery. You will float easily, such a bag of vanity, so much pride could not sink, and then, too, my dear friend, so much virtue could not be washed out by this little stream; the world simply could not spare you; surely, some good devil of the deep would bear you safely ashore. Any one of the many devils for whose sake you beat your wife from the door would certainly be tickled to float by your side. So just trust to your own worth and the work you have done for the devils and strike out." Remember and dive deep," he added, dropping his bantering tone, "You must swim beyond he long eaves before

you come to the surface." He reached out to seize the terror-stricken man. At that moment the head of Mr. Kim shot above the water and called forth a scream from Mr. Cho.

The dim light had prevented Mr. Kim from seeing Bali, till the latter arrested Mr. Kim's onslaught on Mr. Cho with a long laugh, "Why," he said, "the preacher has more wit than Bali. Of course it was the hole in the gable in the opposite room. An advantage of viewpoint, friend, you looking from the outside and I from the in."

For an instant Mr. Kim released his hold on Mr. Cho with a violent start, then pinching his arms to his side by wrapping his own about the small man, and with a hand over Mr. Cho's mouth he carried him rapidly to the opposite end of the room and plunged with his burden through the low door and rose to the surface on the other side, Mr. Cho coughing and spitting and begging to be taken out of danger much as would a child beg for aid.

In the window clinging to the slats sat the hermit, the picture of the winter demon, and as the heads of the three men appeared above the water his teeth showed in a long grin, but whether the look was from pleasure or dissatisfaction could not be told.

"On to the roof," shouted Mr. Kim as soon as he could shake the water from his eyes, "On to the roof and take the man." The hermit obeyed instantly and swung himself on the roof with astonishing agility and ease. Reaching down his long arm he seized Mr. Cho by the arm and swung him to the ridge as he would have deposited a bag of sand, and without glancing in his direction, he again slipped down into the water below the open window and motioned Mr. Kim to precede him out of danger. The preacher motioned the hermit to lead the

· way, but with a dogged shake of the head he slipped further into t:he water. It was with difficulty that Mr. Kim worked his way through the narrow aperture and up on to the roof by the side of Mr. Cho. As he looked back Bali was trying to follow through the narrow opening with many a sputter and fierce imprecation at the smallness of the hole. The heavy slats held his burly form.

"Curses upon the monkey Cho and the preacher too," he called as he strained at the frame that held and suspended him in mid-air. At that moment he glanced down and saw the hermit beneath him clinging to the rope with just his head above water.

"Ah, the devil is down there," he announced soberly. "Now you be a good devil," he said as if he were trying to soothe an irate fiend. "By the way did your satanic majesty raise this delightful shower and start this gentle brook, eh? See here, friend devil, you mountain of muscle, how did

the preacher get through here? Was it a trick, a sleight of hand, learned from his profession? My sides not being greased I can not play the crab neither forward nor backward. If you will take time from staring at me you will note the fact that this rat-trap is going to pieces, and I have just a faint suspicion that I shall not be able to swim off with the whole of it like a snail over the slime of a paddy field. Come now, muscle mountain, give a heave at these bars and I will give you the best chance to be pummeled you have ever had. Give a heave here and I will wallop you as soon as we get ashore, I swear it, I will lick the life out of you. Isn't that inducement enough? Stop your grinning and come up, do you hear? Were it not raining I would spit on you. Five minutes and this old box will go to pieces. A fine way for Bali to finish his course."

The hermit gazed back into Bali's face, his tusks showing but whether in a grin of amusement or in hate Bali could not tell. Slowly he climbed to the window and thrusting one hand between Bali's yielding body and the frame, placed a foot against the building, and straightening himself backwards, tore the frame from the building. In a moment Bali was out on the rope. At that instant shock from a crumbling house above shook the building to which they were clinging and the tiles at the end slipped into the water. Bali saw the rain of tiles and tried to shield his head with one arm but they swept him from the rope down upon the hermit who was carried into the water with Bali but still clinging to the rope. Bali's head appeared for a moment three yards away and then disappeared. Instantly the hermit slipped into the water and sped after the dark patch of hair that started for a moment just above the surface of the water and then disappeared. A dozen yards away was the leafless trunk of a gnarled and crooked pine, its distorted branches and knotted limbs pushing their way aggressively out of the water. In this direction the eddies spun in miniature whirlpools, till within a few feet of the tree, when they would disappear in the churning dancing waters about this obstruction and then beyond, away they whirled in a merry race for the center of the raging flood. These gyrating funnels of water bore the unconscious Bali and pursuer toward the half-sunken tree.

Before Mr. Kim on the house-top and the people on the shore could realize the threatened tragedy a long arm shot from beneath the surface and a mighty hand closed about a limb of the tree. It was immediately followed by the head and shoulders of the hermit who shook himself as a huge mastiff. From this position of advantage he drew up the other arm and the body of the robber chief was balanced across his shoulders. In another moment they were in the tree, the hermit holding the unconscious Bali. It was the work of a moment for Mr. Kim to reach the

tree with his rope and effect a rescue. A little later, on the muddy banks of the river, Bali looked up into the faces of a score of men and women and then scowlingly got to his feet. He put his hand to his head where a strip of white cloth, torn from his own jacket, had been fastened. Removing his hand he looked at the red stain and then at the back of the Hermit who was helping Mr. Kim rescue other imperiled villagers. A little later he was working with astonishing energy, leading another group of villagers in the help of rescue, but quite apart from Mr. Kim and the hermit.

In the afternoon the flood subsided rapidly and when night set in the foundation stones of the little church could be seen, and the home of Mr. Cho had been nearly drained of water though the portion of the house where Bali and Mr. Cho had been imprisoned had collapsed and presented a sorry sight of ruin.

All day the hermit kept close at the heels of Mr. Kim, watching his every move and often forestalling the latter in the performance of some task. In the lifting and removal of wreckage to liberate some imprisoned sufferer he performed prodigious feats but always with the air that Mr. Kim wanted it done.

When darkness came and nothing more could be done the group of rescuers turned their steps towards a village ten li away to secure shelter for the night. None of them had had food since the previous night. Around their tables of rice, in a crowded inn they rehearsed the scenes of the day. "I told you it was caused by the Water Devil," said the man who had insisted that such was the cause of the stream drying up in the midst of a rain storm. "The devil closed his first and the river was dry, he opened his hand and the town was destroyed. I tell you the river is enchanted, and the Water Devil is at work; ah, but I don't see how you Christians escaped when so many faithful people were drowned." The Hermit looked around the circle and for a moment his voice thundered deep in his chest, and then he spoke with his eyes on Mr. Kim. "Two miles above here the two ranges of mountains nearly close in on the valley by projecting two huge spurs from their sides, eh, you have seen it?"

Mr. Kim nodded in reply. "The whole mountain side gave way and an avalanche of earth and rock filled the valley at this point Creating an enormous dam and an ocean of water. The water pressure broke the dam and all villages in the way are gone. I felt the earth shock in the early evening and raced miles to find the cause, and finding it I tried to warn you but was too late."

A babel of voices took up the discussions and pressed the Hermit with a score of questions, but he only shook his head and ate ravenously. He finally leaned against the wall in profound slumber while the clatter of

excited conversation raged around him and tobacco smoke darkened the air.

When Mr. Kim arose early the next morning to return to the stricken village the Hermit had gone and he saw nothing of him for many days. Mr. Cho was the first one to secure workmen to rebuild his wrecked houses. Part of the buildings required only the straightening of a post and the replastering of the walls while others needed to be entirely rebuilt. The work was pushed with such vigor that in three weeks no one visiting the place would have known that any thing unusual had happened to the place.

Mr. Cho had been very quiet; he spoke kindly to his workmen and to his servants and he had been surprised in the act of carrying food to the destitute after dark. The people remarked upon the change in the man but did not trust him, nor would they even under the great pressure of need go to him for aid. Every thing he did was noted and faithfully reported to the gossips of the village. It was told how he had opened up the boxes of wet wearing apparel and from the disarray he had carefully selected the garments of his discarded wife, had them re-ironed and packed exactly as they had been before the flood.

The Christian church was a complete ruin. The foundations had been so undermined that all that had not fallen must be taken down. There were no funds to rebuild and Mr. Kim visited the place every day as he would visit the grave of his loved dead. During' the restoration of Mr. Cho's house he had not seen that gentleman, nor had the latter expressed any appreciation of the service Mr. Kim had rendered in saving his life. On one of his daily visits to the ruined church Mr. Kim was standing looking at the heap of ruin, working over oft repeated estimates and plans for a new building.

He was startled at the sound of Mr. Cho's voice at his elbow. "Bad, eh, could'nt be much worse?" Mr. Kim turned on his visitor a cordial look and immediately launched forth on the problem of restoring the church building. He ended by pointing out a post that was on the point of giving way. "I must call men to pull that post down or some one prowling around for wreckage of doors and window frames will stumble against it and there will be another loss of life or a man maimed for life."

"Right and just would be his suffering did such a one while pilfering fall beneath yonder death trap," was the sharp rejoinder. "Did he escape then should he find justice beneath the Magistrate's paddle."

"It would be poor satisfaction to me should such a man suffer for taking lumber not his own. When your Magistrate's paddle falls not only does the victim's flesh quiver beneath its blade, but there is a sob wrung from the lips of wife and children, while the clan and often a whole

village feels the sting of pain."

"That is the best argument I have heard for our method of administering justice," said Mr. Cho. "A whole village or clan should feel pain from the wrong of one of its members and if sometimes the innocent man gets under the paddle the benefit to the many in admonishing them against crime justifies the suffering of the innocent. I have heard you yourself in public discourse affirm that every man, some time, some where, must meet the just reward of his deeds.

"If you practise as well as preach then I am persuaded that were you a Magistrate your paddle would find much to do."

"If I were a Magistrate," said Mr. Kim slowly, "I would punish every man who became convicted of wrong doing. I would pardon no man the law forbade me to pardon, I would punish with mercy and justice, as God would teach me justice, but," he added steadily looking full into the eyes of Mr. Cho, if violent wrong was done and the matter concerned me and that man alone, I would forgive him, however great that wrong, yae, I would, indeed, forgive him."

"Ah-a-a!" exclaimed Mr. Cho, and his voice ended in something like a sob; he turned his back on Mr. Kim and walked away in the direction of his home.

## CHAPTER XXI. A STRANGE COMMOTION.

At last the church was rebuilt. Funds had come from strange sources. It was whispered that Bali, the Hermit and Mr. Cho knew something of the matter. Mr. Kim was questioned but was as silent as a stone Buddha. The building was nearly twice the size of the old one and the members were content. Two months after the flood the town had made wonderful strides towards recovery. True in many places where tiles once darkened the town, the straw thatch glistened in the sun, long prosperity alone would replace the tiles on the roofs of the town; the East is always patient.

On a certain night the people in the neighborhood of the church were astonished at the sounds of wailing that issued from the church building. This continued for some time and the people concluded that death had visited the Christian ranks. It was observed that "Did the Christians suffer sudden distress and evil, it was what all had expected, and proved that none could deny the Spirits with impunity." When the wailings continued for days without abatement the town became alarmed at the enormity of the calamity, and some gossips at the markets hinted of dark things of which the Christians were undoubtedly guilty. At last

curiosity prevailed over their caution, and one by one then by scores, they crowded the church and the compound eager to see and listen to the strange events.

Mr. Kim stood before the people as a denunciatory prophet. He was preaching with great vigor and the congregation yielded to his sway with abandon, and made public confession bewildering in variety, and terrible in character. "Madness," the people said, "Sheer madness, search history and tradition as far as you will, and you can find no precedent for such conduct. Confessions of envy, malice, hate and hypocrisy are bad enough, and cost any man his face; but what words are there to describe the folly of confessing a theft, and to confess murder is madness. It must be the work of the devil."

After due investigation the town concluded to stay away from the Christian gatherings, agitation is dangerous, too much levity is not good and too many tears is worse, they always bring painful results. Confucius' ideals were self control, imperturbable calm. Alas, the decay of the people! But when finally the congregation voluntarily turned out to call from door to door of their acquaintances, and in paroxysms of grief confessed all manner of evil perpetrated against those to whom they came and insisted on making restitutions, the town was thoroughly alarmed. They were glad enough to have stolen property returned but did not want it returned in that manner. Why should these Christians recall deeds of irresponsible childhood? It was uncanny.

Sleeping memories awoke and they were painful. What if they also should be seized with this new madness and feel compelled to make similar public confession, and restitution! Some among these agitated citizens left the town for a season and tried to lull their conscience back to quiet and forgetfulness. But the time for sleeping seemed to have passed and soon they were back crowding the church doors.

As this period of religious commotion continued three men of remarkable appearance were discovered sitting in these nightly gatherings. In the center of the room sat the Hermit of the salt marsh. So ugly and fearful in appearance was he that the people shrank from him, till the church filled and they crushed up against his rugged person. He took no note of those about him, and seemed utterly oblivious of all but the face of Mr. Kim. On the pastor's face the Hermit fixed his eyes and only withdrew them when the people were dismissed, then he would rise and leave immediately, nor would he return a salutation.

On the floor opposite the Hermit and at the side of the building sat the gigantic figure of Bali, the robber chief. His head and shoulders towered above all those seated around him. His handsome face turned

continuously from preacher to the people. Bali watched with mocking quizzical interest. He too would immediately disappear at the close of the service. At the farthest point from the pulpit, near the door, was the dark face of Mr. Cho. He was so nearly hidden by those around that Mr. Kim could get only an occasional view of his face nor could he tell from the sparkle of his eye that he was not there for the purpose of some mischief . Down in the heart of Mr. Cho a battle was raging. Good resolutions in the past had often sprung up in the heart of this much dreaded man, bitter battles had been fought. There had been victory but it was not his. The struggles of past periods for a better .life, however, were different; then the desire for good was itself meritorious, so he thought, and, while after a brief struggle, he returned to his old deeds of evil and perhaps surpassed the past in their turpitude, he congratulated himself on the fact that he had desired good. Now he was disillusioned, he hated himself, he hated the complacency he once had; he desired the good, and utterly loathed himself. The evil deeds of the past came to life as personal entities and were jeering and mocking him. In another way his experience was different. Before, while the contention lasted, he seemed to improve and spoke more gently to others, but now he grew more irascible and his neighbors fled from him. He arose each morning with the sun resolving to drive these days of remorse to their kennels forever, and in a measure he succeeded but at the approach of the evening hour their fangs settled within. his soul.

Under the influence of these Christian gatherings, men braved his presence in his home and kneeling, confessed the sin of long regarding him with feelings of hate, and then they asked for his forgiveness. Forgiveness? the word was a sword thrust. He would forgive if there were aught to forgive. But the word challenged his relations with men. If he were to forgive then he must seek forgiveness. This moral demand filled him with terror, and the approach of a neighbor started the cold perspiration over his face and stirred within him the spirit of panic.

During this period, Mr. Cho often walked the streets through whole nights battling against the remorse that burned in his soul. While passing the streets, the confessions he had heard in the church, which had named vices and crime, was the touchstone that called to life similar and greater deeds of wrong hidden in his own life, Many of these evil deeds had been almost forgotten, still their shadow had ever been on the horizon of his memory; they had not in the past really risen to mock and condemn him, but their distant shadowy presence filled his mind with unrest and irritation, and under their haunting presence his irate disposition found new avenues for inflicting suffering upon his weaker neighbors. One wrong was pregnant with a multitude of others and brought forth a swarm

of violence and excess. He strove to forget his evil deeds in the multitude of his excesses. Now, these specters of forgotten crime drew aside the curtain of the past and stalked uncompromisingly before him, awful, hideous.

On one of these vigils his footsteps led him to the front of a thatched house, on the outskirts of the town; darkness made it indistinct and shadowy. During the passage of time it had undergone many changes. He was not thinking of it as it would now appear did the light of day stream out upon it; his imagination pictured it as it was long ago when he entered it and a man had perished. Mr. Cho would have passed on, but the fascination of the scene once enacted held him as with a vice and his mind relentlessly traveled over its details. He was conscious of a surprise that he had never observed the building so closely; there were the worn door steps; the marred door frame; the hinge swinging loose from the door, the discolored thatch roof; on the ground lay a tool with a nitched edge, cast there by some careless workman. He again saw the wife of his victim and heard her weeping; the face of the ruined man looked out at him with its appeal for mercy. He had schemed to secure the man's property and had done his work well.

During this review of his past, he had been unconsciously fingering the front of his rich silk coat. Suddenly he was aware of the feel of the garment as a flame and it scorched his fingers; he tore the garment from his back and flung it from him and ran from the place. The horror of his soul drove him on; chased him into new terrors of awakened remorse.

The population of that section was composed of not more than half a dozen clans. Suffering inflicted upon one family was felt keenly by the whole clan which the family represented, therefore, Mr. Cho's walk was lined with the homes representative of those whom he had wronged. His mind unbidden by his will traced out the relation of each family to some one of his unholy deeds, and he marked to a nicety the proportion that each had suffered.

His course through the town led him by the Christian chapel and suddenly it loomed up before him and brought him to a halt as if arrested by a blow from out the darkness. He saw the faces of the penitent congregation and heard the eloquent uncompromizing sermons of the pastor. The pastor! his face, his glance, how he hated them! He was the incarnation of the new movement; the one responsible for the ruin of his home and a long train of suffering.

For months he had been humiliated with the knowledge that Mr. Kim was a mightier man than he, and he knew that in the long struggle to dominate the other he himself must suffer defeat, as he was contending

with forces of which he knew nothing, and so much the more did he hate his opponent; but all that appeared to lay in the past and seemed to be bound up with another personality. Perhaps he would some day return to his own and then he would take up the old contest. Feeling thus since the awakening of his conscience he had not sought for the author of his torment. It was knowledge that had plunged him into darkness and remorse; he saw his heart and understood the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Now, however, as he looked up at the dark outline of the church building he had a vision of the preacher. So real was it that long after he was still uncertain whether he did not gaze upon the face and form of Mr. Kim. As he looked, words that he had heard took on meaning; he saw for the first time that escape from his sufferings could be had only by baring his soul to the gaze of men; his mind staggered in revolt against that man with his message of this inexorable necessity:

The hallucination passed and a revulsion of feeling swept over him; there was the church building, representing the cause of all his woes. Bitterness and hate scorched his heart anew and a delirium of rage seized him. At that moment, as if to invite an expression of his hate, his foot touched a stone; in an instant he had it in his hand and ran for the church; with the fury of a mad man he beat the closed door from its hinges, dragged it into the yard and tore at the light frame with his bare hands, then with a wolfish snarl buried his teeth in the soft wood. Presently he sprang to his feet and fled from the town; he hurried toward the river fifty li away with a fearful purpose burning in his mind.

Many of the sages had taught that a man's life is his own, and when for any reason it becomes unbearable or in his judgment best for the satisfaction of creed or cult he may throw it away. Mr. Cho had taunted his wife when he drove her from his door with her unwillingness to comply with this doctrine. He now hastened on with the one idea that there is more pain in living than in death; he would speedily end it all and be at rest; he repeated again and again, "Peace, peace and rest."

Before he reached the river bank the dawn arose and shook out its gilded draperies, awakening the denizens of forest and field to song: the glad music of a golden morning burst upon the wanderer. Mr. Cho paused and leaning against a rock by the way rested his aching eyes upon the glories of its new day, and listened to its throbbing life till its music stirred his heart, till the wild passion, half hate, half despair, lifted from his soul as a mist from a fetid pool. Then nature again strove to gain rational control.

Mr. Cho turned to retrace his steps, realizing that a change had come over him; he seemed numb from the effects of the long contending

passions, a welcome calm settled over him yet strange fantacies flitted back and forth in his mind as might a shuttle in a loom long after the noise and clamor of the machine has ceased. He reviewed his recent furor of soul and came acts of violence without emotion. With the calm a clearness' of vision that he had not had before. Quiet had come to him but not deadness, his thoughts sped on; without willing it his mind picked up many details of the past which he did not remember during the period of his recent passion; they did not startle nor worry him.. How long it seemed since first arose that mental remorse and suffering; it seemed as though it must have been that of another person in whom he took but casual interest. It is amazing that one should become excited over an idea.

All the past pother, foolish battlings over an idea! or was this strange calm rather a cause for marvel? However, he was glad for the release from pain, and yet he felt a distant sense of disappointment, for during all his suffering there had been a ray of hope that with the lifting of the crushing sorrow, guilt, its source, would be destroyed. The travel in prodigious pain had been bootless. He would like to have laid his head down with the feeling of innocency as he did many years ago—it must have been ages—when he placed his head in his mother's lap. Perhaps that wish was also a part of his recent madness, however, he would now be content and take up life at the point where he laid it down two weeks ago. Two weeks? Ah-! two years! nay, a life time! He stood in his tracks and tried to measure the vast stretch of time represented by his experience. But it was at last gone and he still here, the people of the town still his neighbors, and his old relations still the same. Yes, he would seek contentment with his lot, nay, he would glory in it and rule the town as he had always done. True, new ideas had taken possession of some of the people, and perhaps these ideas would seek to trouble him, but what mattered. It was unthinkable that he should journey over the way of misery again simply from the force of an idea. He almost smiled at the thought. Why should one be overwhelmed by the force of an intangible creed? Houses, land, and such material things are the ones that endure: these and one's fellows with warm flesh and blood are the things that make one secure. Peace is found in the substantial presence of one's friends and family. Family! Again Mr. Cho stopped in the middle of the street and a groan escaped his lips. It was an idea, a creed that had led him to drive Martha from his home.

During this period of remorse a multitude of scenes of his past had relentlessly marched in condemnation before him, but in all this review Martha had not been among them. Now, last of all, she stood before him, her sweet face lifted to his. He again saw the red clot in her hair and the

marble face lying so still on the mat and the dark circle widening around it. As he stood there an icy chill passed over him and he tried to turn his head aside. Then Martha's white face was at his knee begging for mercy. Again her parting words rang in his ears. "If you will it, we shall live together, forever, forever."

Mr. Cho had stopped on the outskirts of the town, opposite a thatched house. Suddenly a burst of song, of thanks-giving and praise, poured out into the street and filled the air; it was the hymn Martha had sung in the early morning of the day he attempted to destroy her. The great calm that had reigned in his heart for the last two hours was swept away. It seemed to him that he had just struck Martha to the floor. He looked at his hands and loathed them. When did he pronounce those curses against her, was it but now? He could bite the tongue from his mouth for the words he had spoken. The old nameless horrors settled upon him again as he staggered down the street.

Once for all be would go to the Christian minister and confess the deeds of his miserable life. There seemed no other place of escape, however secret, in all the world. A few moments later he found himself at the front of the house that sheltered Mr. Kim, and for the third time that morning he stood still in the street while war surged through his soul.

The challenge he had seen written on the face of the pastor many months ago stirred his hostile being to the depth. He would not allow that man to triumph over him, then too there was that last act of violence; he would have to confess to the destruction of the church door. Such humiliation to a man who had ruled the town for fifteen years was intolerable. What fool impulse was this he had entertained at the behest of an idea? He would go home.

Through the long hours of the day, Mr. Cho sat on the floor of his home in a delirium of remorse, and as the shadow of evening settled over the town he lay down on his mat and slept from exhaustion; his dreams were filled with the frightful struggle. He thought he was standing by the side of an enormous tree such as are cared for in all villages, sacred to the abode of evil spirits. At his elbow was a large cavity going down into the roots. He listened and heard ascending voices, confused, unhappy murmurings, and bickerings: picking up a handful of pebbles he dropped them into the cavity and the murmurings redoubled. He leaned over the opening and listened to the multitude of voices. Each one was distinct with an individuality. He recognized them all. Each one was recounting with many imprecations the wrongs and injuries inflicted upon him by Mr. Cho. Some were wailing at the grave, some pleading for food he had snatched from their lips; others were screaming under the Magistrate's

paddle; he heard the death rattle in the throat of others; then suddenly the cries, moans, imprecations, died down into low murmurs, sobs and sighs. Then there was a hush as if a multitude held its breath. Mr. Cho. strained his ears with new terror; he wanted to flee but was held to the spot by grizzly fear. Suddenly from the dark depth was the sound of a blow, followed by Martha's wild scream of anguish. Then pandemonium was let loose. Mr. Cho awoke with a scream and sprang into the middle of the room. He wiped the cold sweat from his brow and strove to quiet the throbbing of his heart. The sound of singing came faintly into his room. He knew the people were gathering for the evening worship.

In the sound was a call and a promise, a promise of forgiveness and peace.

A half hour later Mr. Kim was surprised to see Mr. Cho down in front of the congregation within a few feet of where he stood. The evening service began as usual without formal introduction. The reading of the Scriptures had a large place. It was followed by a brief explanation and amplification. At the conclusion a score of people rose to their feet and waited that each in his turn might rehearse the story of his dark life as the only means for forgiveness and healing. Finally, Mr. Cho arose; staggered as if on the point of falling. He rested one hand on the pulpit for support, then turned his face upward, and tipped it to one side and waited, his face drawn and old. He was seen to grip the pulpit in the effort to steady himself to meet the shock of the coming moral cataclysm. He closed his eyes and the specters of evil deeds trooped before him in a long procession. They had haunted him for many days, yes, for many years they had troubled him. As soon as he had a chance he would name them one by one, all of them, for in so doing he would banish them and would find forgiveness and peace from Him who said "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." He lost the sense of time and while waiting the voices of others making their confessions seemed to come to him from a great distance and was a part of the great conflict going on within him. Midnight passed and he still stood rigid waiting for his turn; then the early cock crew and Mr. Kim turned to Mr. Cho and in a quiet voice said, "Now my Brother tell the Master what is in your heart" A hush fell on the congregation. Bali was in his usual place. He arose and leaned heavily against a post. The Hermit fixed his great eyes more earnestly on the face of the pastor.

Mr. Cho's lips parted and be seized the sides of the pulpit with both hands for better support, then they fell to his side and he stood rigid while his breath came in sudden explosive gusts; his words were not loud but penetrated the whole house, and cut the air with sharp knife-like stabs.

"Oh, the guilt! the guilt!" he exclaimed. Then in the midst of a paroxysm of grief that threatened each moment to overwhelm him, he recounted the scenes of wrong he had enacted against his fellows, many of whom sat gazing at him. "Forgive me" he pleaded. He paused and his lips tried to frame a name and refused; finally he said just above a whisper, "Our pastor, I tried to kill him." His voice arose, writhing, as the voice of a man under torture. "Four times I tried to kill him; once under the Magistrate's paddle; once Bali refused my money to kill him; I set fire to the town to enflame the people to kill him, but they killed the school master; innocent Moon; his blood is on my head. Once I struck the preacher to the ground and thought him dead. Oh, I wanted his death." There was a long pause. Mr. Cho's lips moved without making a sound, then in a whisper he said, "My wife." Hardly had the word fallen from his lips than he tottered and was only saved from a hard fall by a pair of kind hands at his back. His face whitened and he lay still. Some said he was dead. A half hour later the unconscious man was carried to his home and with kind sympathy laid on a warm place on the floor. When he came to himself his visitors, from a feeling of delicacy, immediately withdrew.

The violence of Mr. Cho's remorse was not a surprise to the Church members, since they had seen many overwhelmed with grief during the last few weeks. The non-Christian community was greatly perturbed over the matter of his excitement. It did not argue well for the peace of the town. That he had been a hard man all agreed, and it would take many sobs to atone for all the wrongs he had inflicted upon others.

His nearest neighbors wondered at the sounds of grief that filtered through the thin walls of his home. None dare approach the irrascible man, for years of association had taught them that he was never so dangerous as when laboring under great excitement; so they fastened their doors more securely and measured the extent that some one would suffer by the amount of weeping they heard. They made many a shrewd guess as to who the victim might be, and strained their ears to catch a word that would declare his purpose and assure each listener of safety.

Early dawn brought the denizens of the town into the street and the news of Mr. Cho's confessions flew from lip to lip. Bali, the robber, had spent the night with Mr. Kim and had become a Christian, they said. The world had become topsy-turvy. The Devil was following the preacher wherever he went as a dog at his heels and no one dare wag his tongue against the Church for fear the Devil would take revenge; he was therefore, no doubt d Christian. Mr. Cho had stated he would restore all property he had wrongfully taken from any one, any where, at any time; sure he must be a mighty rich man. Bali will make right all the wrongs of which he was

guilty: indeed he must expect to live forever. The Devil proposed to be like other men, only better. At this the people laughed. "What is this new religion, would it make the Devil's face like the face of other men?"

The people forgot to open their shops that day and they spent the whole time in listening to tales of eye witnesses to the scenes of the previous night.

Just before the dawn, Mr. Cho checked his grief and reaching for a candle carried it to a huge iron bound box in the corner of the room and unlocked it. He swung the door wide open and carefully drew out several women's garments made of delicate fabric. One of the number be held long in the light. It was a light blue silk and had the appearance of having been worn many times. He touched it tenderly then drew out others and lay them in an orderly pile on the floor. At the bottom of the box he drew forth a pair of delicate sandals made of hemp. Inside of each was a tiny sandal made for a baby's foot. He held them in his hand a long time, turning them over and over before the light; then placed them on the floor side by side; the heels of the baby's sandal by the side of the larger one; the toe of the smaller reached only to the instep of the other. He looked at them for a long time, then knelt with his head by the side of the sandals in a paroxysm of grief. Suddenly he raised himself from the floor and laying the silk goods together carefully replaced them in the iron bound box and locked it. He wrapped the sandals in a bit of soft paper and hid the bundle in his bosom; rising to his feet he reached overhead to a shelf under the rafters and took down a dust laden bundle. He carried it to the light and unwrapped it with trembling fingers. A much worn Bible and hymn book lay in his hands. Some of the leaves were stuck together and the white pages were stained red: as he looked them over his face became drawn and pinched; again he placed his head to the floor and sobbed. When his grief was spent he took from another box a bundle of coin and strapped it around his waist, and opening the lining of his under jacket he slipped many silver coins into the lining. He bound the books in a bundle of clothing and strapped them to his back. He stepped out into the street and lifted his face to the star-lit heavens of the north and faced the road taken by Martha many months ago.

Silence reigned about Mr. Cho's house all day and his neighbors' curiosity was raised to fever heat. They wanted to see the man who had so long exploited the town and now begged for forgiveness and promised to make restitution. They were not sure that it was really safe to present their bills. Would he really do it or could he really make right, could he blot out years of suffering? Could he raise the dead? As the sun fell into the west a crowd stood on the opposite side of the street from his house and

discussed the matter with great animation.

"I was there and heard it all," exclaimed a young man who had assumed the position of spokesman. "His crying was nothing, that was easy, they were all crying, and I felt like it myself, though I don't know why. But he stared around at those who were sitting there whom he had wronged and calling them by name said he would restore all their property. He lied I think, though rich he may be he can't do that, unless, indeed, he squeezes some one else to get the money."

"Fool," some one replied, "don't you see that when a man begins the new religion that he loses all his skill to squeeze other people. Sorry am I for the old fellow but it looks as though he would, indeed, starve." Mr. Cho starve! the thought was preposterous and was greeted with a shout of merriment.

As the twilight deepened there was a stir at one side of the jostling crowd and Bali's tall figure was seen pushing his way through the company. He glanced neither right nor left, and the people gave way in recognition that he was master; a homage they always had paid this remarkable man. He strode without pause into the Cho compound and the street crowd pushed up to the doors.

Bali found the house empty. The frightened gate keeper informed him that his master ceased weeping just before dawn, but since then he had heard nothing from him and knew nothing about him, however the gate was ajar and he was sure that it was well fastened on the inside the night before. If Mr. Cho were not in the house, he, no doubt, had left the place early in the morning. Bali looked the man over sternly. The latter earnestly protested that he had not been negligent. "I beg you," said he, "do not suspicion me, for no man dare enter his presence unbidden, and I have waited here faithfully for his call all day."

Bali was by profession a hunter of men. For many years he had hunted them to inflict some savage wrong or in a spirit of generous caprice he would hunt with equal energy to redress a wrong or to bestow a magnanimous favor. He stepped from the door and sniffed the air, and his quick glance took in the details of the place; the roofs of the houses and the distant hills. Like a mastiff on the trail, he shook himself and began the circle of the town. He searched every nook and corner, every house, and then extended his search in widening circles. Report came to him that Mr. Cho had sought the river and ended his troubles there. Bali ran the report to its source and dismissed the fabrication from mind. At last he struck the trail and sped northward. On a certain midnight he entered a village and sought out an inn well known to him. Sharp inquiries of the inn keeper followed, then Bali entered a room where the light of a tallow

dip burned low. The tread of cat could have been no lighter than his. In the corner was a bundle. He trimmed the candle and held it low; there lay the man he sought, his face turned away and his head resting on a wooden pillow; the front of his jacket was open and there peeped out the toes of a delicate sandal; by his side lay a red covered Bible with the white leaves stained red. Bali stood many minutes, solemnly looking at the figure before him, then the sleeper moved and Bali blew out the candle. A puff of fresh air announced the opening of the door and Bali stood on the outside. "It is well," said he to the inn keeper, who protested at Bali leaving before morning, "he is my friend; treat him kindly and say nothing of my visit." The inn keeper knew better than to ask questions of this dread man of the highway and breathed freely when Bali had disappeared down the village street.

When Bali returned without Mr. Cho it was said that if the Robber Chief could not find him then search was useless. Bali took charge of the deserted house and effects, and no one dare question his right to do so.

## CHAPTER XXII. A NAMELESS WOMAN.

Long after the hermit had said farewell, his words echoed in Martha's mind, like the sound of some machinery that droned on yet arrested not her attention. She was thinking of the man who had beaten her; and she prayed fervently for him.

During the following days, as she lay under the canopy in the center of the boat, in the place assigned her, she watched the shores wistfully for some familiar sight by which she might recognize the way. Her recent experience on the salt marsh warned her to make no inquiries of strangers. On the morning of the fifth day they reached the town called White Lily. Martha remembered the stop her husband made with her on their journey to his home years ago because the name had suggested the lilies that grew near her mountain home. She remembered how keen had been her disappointment when she entered the dust laden town, and at the inn how she had been pestered by miriads of flies. She now picked up her babe and bound it to her back, and from the little bundle of coin, offered the boatman a sum to pay her fare. He courteously waved her aside and in a kindly voice bade her farewell. She stepped down from the boat marveling greatly at the hermit's power to make her secure in her journey and close the lips of the boatman, equally against gossiping but her past, or making inquiries regarding her plans for the future. Well she knew, that did they talk, word of her lonely journey would outspeed their slow

moving boat and cruel hands would meet her on the way. Again she thanked her Master for the friendship of the hermit and turned her footsteps to the ferry that led westward across the river.

While waiting, the boat filled with a string of passengers with their donkeys, horses and bundles of firewood and grain destined for that part of the town situated on the opposite side of the river.

Among the number that interested her most was a group who came streaming down the bank just before the boat pushed off from shore. They looked much worn from a long journey. A man led the way carrying on his back a great load of household goods; after him followed another with an equally large load; two women walked in their rear with large bundles on their heads, one of whom carried a baby on her back; they, in turn, were followed by two small boys each carrying a small bundle like their elders. There were no seats in the boat and these last sat down on the bottom and took no interest in their fellow passengers. Martha watched their movements with great interest, and finally made her way to where the party stood, crowding past horses, donkeys, and piles of brush wood. Martha singled out the elder woman of the two and enquired in the usual formal manner where she was going, and where she came from.

"We have come a long distance," she replied, with a dull look at Martha. "We have walked three hundred li and the road is a weary one."

"And where are you going?" Martha persisted.

"Going, going?" she repeated, "let me see, we arc going, you, there, where are we going?" she asked turning her head in the direction of one of the men near her, and without waiting for a reply added in a garrulous voice, "We are leaving poverty and traveling in poverty and going to poverty: that is where we are going. There were no rains last season and we starved, and we have been starving ever since and we are going to starve when we get to the end of our journey. Better die now, a good deal better, than make our friends bury us when we get there. I suppose they would bury us. He says he has friends at that end," she added looking scornfully at the man whom she had just addressed. "I wonder if he thinks they will feed us. Bigger fool than he was when he sowed rice instead of millet last year. He knew that it was only an occasional year when there is water enough to grow rice; always dreaming about getting rich and always sowing rice on dry land. Fool enough to dream that he can get a living out of those distant mountains, nothing but rocks, and I am a fool to follow him." Again she looked at the man as she might at a culprit from whom she had suffered great wrong. The man was evidently her husband; he ventured no reply, and turning his back upon her, looked down disconsolately at his hard rough hands as if wearied of

an old subject that he was unable to dispose of. As the boat touched the shore the sharp faced woman picked up her bundle with many a grunt and groan.

You look worn and ill," said Martha, "and I am sorry to see you so."

"Humph! Not worn, nor ill, just hungry, that is all."

"Why, you are not traveling without money?" said Martha, in wonder.

"Money, child," said she turning and looking Martha over, "this is a heavy load, but the load is growing lighter; so are all their bundles; he sells something every day," she added with a jerk of her head in the direction of the man ahead of her.

"Got to eat," he said without looking up.

"Eat! When we get there, if we don't die by the way, we will not have a rag left: understand, now, I will not allow another scrap sold though you all starve. Better starve now and have something with which to bury your carcass." Evidently encouraged that she had a reply from her husband, she started off in a tirade against the things she had endured on the long journey. She had had a half bowl of millet that morning, having had to divide the bowl with that other woman; a half bowl the morning before, and not even hot water to make the insipid stuff go down. She kept her eyes on the back of her husband. He made no reply, evidently repenting that he had so far forgotten himself as to reply to her at all. At last her voice trailed off into many a puff and grumble.

For some lime Martha walked silently at the rear of the column of wanderers, fearing again to speak to this sharp tongued woman, but finally the necessity of looking ahead for shelter for the night compelled her to again approach the irascible woman.

"Pardon me," Martha said timidly, "You did not tell me the name of the place where you are going; I have special reasons for wanting to know." The woman turned abruptly on her questioner and balancing her load on her head, said,

.'Tell you, sure I will tell you. Our destination is 800 li from here on the Yalu River. Do you understand? Eight hundred li, Falcon Peak is the name. Why do you ask?"

"May I go with you?" Martha asked with a fear at her heart, "I am quite alone and perhaps I shall have to travel farther even than you." The woman put the load down from her head and sat flat on the ground, and looked Martha over from her head to her rough sandals.

"I go!" she exclaimed, "You don't live here? Where is your husband? Running away from him, eh? Why, you pretty fool. Walk eight hundred li and carry that baby too?"

"No," said Martha, "I have not run away as you think. Indeed my husband sent me forth on this journey. You say you have had trouble. We have bad trouble also and I am compelled to return for a while to my father's family. They live in a village called Pine Tree Knob."

"Igo!" the woman said again and looked up into Martha's appealing face. "'Igo!" she repeated with half commiserating wonder, and scrambled to her feet, placed the load on her head, and hastened to overtake her companions, occasionally giving vent to an explosive, "Igo !" Martha followed with a strange beating of the heart; she had banked her safety on the loyalty of this irascible woman whom she had known for only an hour. When they overtook the party the woman addressed her husband.

"See here, you, this young woman is going with us all the way, nor is she running away from her husband; do you understand?" and she looked defiance into the other's face. "She is going with us and will carry her baby. Move along, I say, what you staring at!" she commanded when the company stopped and turned slowly with their heavy bundles to look at Martha, who had shrunk close to her champion. After a brief stare the company moved on without a word, while the woman repeated, "Igo!" every few breaths. A little later the husband muttered, "No money?"

"Of course she has no money," said the woman, "What use has she for money? I want to tell you one thing—this bundle is getting mighty heavy and I shall sell it so fast the inn-keepers will stare. Do you understand?" Again her voice dared any one to dispute her. Later when the woman fell behind, for her load was exceedingly heavy, Martha said,

"I have a bit of money, and I would not allow you to sell anything from your pack for me, no, not for the world."

"Hush," said the woman, "you have no money, of course You have none. Will you remember you have no cash? Mind, I am the treasurer of this party: he gets drunk sometimes, especially when I scold, and I am going to do a lot of that The other man is his younger brother and is a fool; that woman is his wife and knows less than he, and you know less than any of them. See that you keep your money out of sight. If you are very rich, indeed, but your jacket does not declare it, why, you can sometimes slip a bit of cash into my hand when the rest are not looking, but mind, you have no money, Igo!" she repeated again.

Martha longed for the close of the day that would compel the wanderers to find shelter for the night. Her head had scarcely healed and the black marks of her husband's beating were as large as ever over her whole body, and she had hard work concealing them from the sharp eyes of her protectress. During the mid afternoon her strength nearly gave out;

her friend noting her fatigue complained to the company that she herself was simply played out and must have a rest Martha's gratitude brought tears to her eyes. In spite of these frequent rests that followed it seemed as if the sun would never reach the horizon. As they were directed to the women's quarters, at the inn that night, Martha crawled across the floor on hands and knees; removing her babe from her back, she lay down by its side and was immediately lost in the profound sleep of exhaustion. Two hours later she was awakened for the evening meal, and again she fell into a deep sleep.

Early the next morning she was awakened by the presence of some one bending over her; she looked up into the eyes of her recent friend, "Hush," said the latter, "how much money have you "

Martha had not counted the coin the hermit gave her, so the two women withdrew from the proximity of the other women guests who had chosen various places on the bare floor for rest, and sitting down in a corner, silently counted the bright silver and nickel pieces. "Seventy yang," announced the woman, "very good, very good, indeed; twenty days, three yang a day for the expense of the inns and a bit each day for the price of sandals. There will be a bit left, that is well. Shall I care for it, and pay your bills? I fear it would not be well for you to pay separate from our company. Should it be learned that you were a stranger to us and had no legal claims upon us, no magistrate in the country would protect you. You are a Christian, you say, and are truthful. I am not a Christian and I lie. It seems good to lie in the defense of a sweet little face like yours. On this journey, I am your mother, do you understand? Your husband is following on after us. If you think it wrong to lie you needn't; I will do it for you." Martha handed her the little bundle of coin with a feeling of relief to see it in the hands of the other. "But," she said after a moment of agitation, "I beg of you, do not lie on my account; surely an evil deed can not bring good; the thistle seed won't grow rice,"

"Now see here," replied her friend, "I don't expect my lie to grow a truth, if it would I would not tell it. I want them to think the lie to the end. Truth or no truth, this is not your business; I don't want you to meddle with mine. Understand? this is my business."

When the party left the inn the woman produced a bundle for Martha to carry on her head. She looked at it in surprise and dismay; for on the previous day she had all she could do to keep pace with the company with only her baby on her back. "It is right," said the woman in sharp commanding tones, "right for you to bear part of the burden of the road." The bundle looked heavy; Martha meekly reached for it, secretly chiding herself for the lack of gratitude for the protection the woman was

giving her. Her companion did not allow her to take it but herself fastened it to Martha's head band. Martha looked up into the sharp featured woman's face and the tears of thankfulness moistened her eyes. The bundle was filled with nothing heavier than a bunch of very loose cotton and she felt no sense of weight at all. "There you must carry loads with the rest of us," she repeated, and the others nodded their heads in approval. She struggled to get her own huge load on her head, and Martha trudged at her heels. When they had passed out of the town Martha's hand timidly sought that of her friend's as it swung down a moment from the heavy load.

"Igo! Igo!" the woman exclaimed, "You must carry loads with the rest of us, indeed, you must," and a severe look settled over her face, but her hand rested long in the hand of Martha.

Each day of the long journey was a repetition of the previous. Martha remembered it through the years, for the dusty hot days and chill nights; the continuous tramp; the curious stare of a stranger; the sweating, toiling burden bearers; the whimper of her babe; the ache of body and the thirst; and amidst it all the sound of the sharp tongue of the garrulous woman who was so faithfully defending her. At night the inns were a cause of gratitude and among the scenes most impressed upon her were the inviting doors open and the men of their party with their bovine faces setting down their ponderous loads. She formed a great attachment for the rough, half fierce woman who always carried on her lips a rebuke to cover some act of kindness, or as a tigress at bay was always at Martha's side to fly out at over-bold strangers they met on the way.

As the days passed, Martha's endurance increased, and the expense of the road lightened the loads of her companions, and they made better progress. As they approached the end of their journey Martha watched the mountains, their wooded peaks, and long fiords for familiar landmarks. At last they were told that it was a hundred li to the town known as Pine Tree Knob. "Two days more," Martha murmured to her baby, "only two days." Hope put elasticity into her steps, and a feeling of buoyancy into her bosom. They would receive her kindly, and then, too, word must soon come from her husband. God would answer her prayer; he would come for her and it would be a joyous ride back in a richly covered chair with husband and servant to make the journey pleasant. Ah, yes, he would be a Christian and they would attend church and read God's Word together. Thus she dreamed as she approached her childhood home and her eyes sparkled with delight over the sweet picture. The following evening she knelt longer than usual over her prayers, and her companion watched her with interest. "Martha," she said, "that is a strange name, but

better than none; strange, isn't it, how a name gives a woman an individuality. Does your husband call you Martha?" and without waiting for a reply she added, "My husband says, 'you,' 'inside-the-house,' or when in haste even though not angry, hurls at me some epithet of contempt. I am a nameless woman. Millions of us in Korea. Some protected by their own shrewd wit and savage tongue, but you poor soft baby, how did you withstand your husband even with your name?"

"What!" cried Martha in astonishment that her companion knew anything relating to her trouble.

The nameless woman gave a sniff and continued, "What? did you think I did not know. Poor innocent fool! did you think I did not see the black marks the day you asked to go with us. Why, child, I could tell with my eyes shut that you were fleeing from cruelty, but your baby-eyes were full of innocence and I cared for you."

"Oh, no, no," cried Martha, "I did not flee from my husband. You guessed right when you said he beat me, but I would not leave him though he killed me," she paused and the brightness all faded from her face and she half whispered, "He drove me from his home, drove us out, baby and me."

"Ah, I see," said the woman, "you set up your new religion against his." Martha nodded.

"Yes," said Martha, with a faraway look on her face as she gazed out of the open door at the gathering darkness. "When you obey the Christ, He is with you. No, He, Himself is in you and makes you endure cruelty and death with sweetness in your heart. You have heard me say no ill of my husband, no, nor could I have other than tenderness for him."

"And you say it is only to believe?" asked the nameless woman after a long pause, and not waiting for a reply she called for their hostess and made some enquiries about their evening meal, the character of the road ahead of them, and the distance to Pine Tree Knob. She saw to it that Martha had the largest bowl of millet and dainty bits of salt fish.

About noon the next day, the wanderers passed around the foot of a large spur of a mountain and suddenly they found themselves looking up a beautiful mountain fiord. It stretched away before their eyes a seeming interminable distance. At the end of the fiord a mountain buttressed the sky, beyond it was another peak majestic, grand, and far beyond that the blue spires of God's temples pierced the sky.

Martha stood a long time looking upon the scene with a feeling of its familiarity. She was good to look upon as she stood with parted lips and flushed cheeks and animated eyes. I know it, I know it!" she exclaimed pointing up the fiord.

"See," she called, "there it is, that village up there on the mountain side. There, do you see, back of those tall pines? That is my old home." She laughed a soft silvery laugh, clasped her hands and still gazed at the mountain.

"Igo!" exclaimed her companion, looking earnestly into the face of Martha, "Igo, you pretty thing, why don't you pray?"

"Pray for what?" asked Martha in surprise. "Because you are safely home."

"I will." said Martha, and seizing both hands of the older woman pulled her down on her knees; she prayed while her friend gazed at her pretty face, then closed her eyes and continued to repeat softly "Igo!" "Heaven1y Father I thank you," Martha prayed, "for bringing me safely home and for raising up for me this kind friend. May she know you as I know you and repent of all her sins. Amen." "Igo!" said the nameless woman.

They arose to their feet, and Martha still holding the hand of her companion walked slowly to the point where the road divided. The other members of the company had preceded them to the forks of the road and had set down their loads for a rest. They were surprised that Martha had reached the end of her journey, and expressed their regrets for having to part from her company. They, however, took the matter with the same nonchalance with which she was received into their company. Life had been hard with them, friends had come and gone, gaunt famine and death had stalked through their families and clan, leaving behind only painful footprints, and memories of hushed voices. Tragedies were so frequent that the scene had become commonplace. They had wept their eyes dry, and, what advantage is there in a moan that neither brings relief or awakes attention? As the dumb beast of burden receives the lash with patient endurance and closes his eyes at the flash of a descending blow, only to open them with a dumb look through blurred vision at the cause of the smart and hurt, so these toilers suffered and endured and knew not why life was bootless. Martha had come and was going, what mattered? Had one of their number fallen by the way and a little mound alone been left to mark the spot, they would have simply bent the head lower under the blow, and, without understanding, toiled on.

Tears were in Martha's eyes when she turned from them up the long fiord. Her heart had been knit into the heart of the nameless woman, and she understood something of the world tragedy that rested upon the lives of them all.

The party, immediately on Martha's departure, lifted their loads to their backs and started off on their toilsome journey. After a few moments

Martha looked back at her friend who still stood gazing in Martha's direction with the heavy load balanced on her head; as Martha nodded a final farewell the woman beckoned her to wait, and putting her load down she came swiftly to where Martha was standing, and, half out of breath, she abruptly asked,

"Does it bring you peace and rest when you are weary and lonely, and hungry, does it now? It is a strange name you have; does it, Martha?"

"Yes," said Martha, "you will always be at peace when God is within you."

"Ah-a, believe and pray, is that all? You arc sure the Christ would listen to me?"

"Assuredly he would. Believe and pray," said Martha.

The nameless woman laughed softly to herself, and looked down at her rough hands and soiled clothes, and repeated, "Me? listen to me?" She laughed again while she brushed a tear from her cheek.

Martha watched her as she retraced her steps and again lifted the load to her head and hastened on to overtake her comrades, then Martha turned and hurried up the long fiord to her childhood home. Her mind echoed with the question that had been on her lips since the day she had turned her face to the north, "Would they receive her?" And her doubts and trepidations increased as she approached her old home.

There was a general stir in the village of Pine Tree Knob when Martha arrived. Her marriage had been the wonder and the envy of the citizens of the town. While her father's family had been thrifty land holders, they in no wise compared in wealth with the rich Cho. What a disgrace to the family of Martha! Would they ever dare lift their heads from this shame? They would not have thought such a deed as leaving a husband possible to one of that honorable clan, but then women are women and one can never tell what they will do, especially a pretty woman. Before many hours had passed gossip had said many things not complimentary to Martha. It was unthinkable that any thing but moral delinquency on her part could have caused the separation. "Of course," they said, "now that the deed was done there was no help for it, and they felt sorry for the excellent gentleman, Mr. Cho. As for the woman, she could probably be consoled by some widower who was too poor to secure a wife in the regular way." They began suggesting the names of different ones in the neighborhood who might condescend to accept of such a hussy, provided she could prove her skill in washing and cooking.

When Martha had explained that she was driven from her home because of her new faith the town was filled with consternation. "Well it was," they said, "that her husband had dealt with her summarily. Who but

the husband has a right to dictate the form of religion that shall be used in his own home. Better would it have been, had he first of all dealt with her as is proper for husbands to do. A shallow woman as she has proven herself lo be could have been speedily punished into shape and obedience; strange how weak some men prove themselves when there is a crisis. The whole thing was unreasonable, wholly insane. Perhaps this young woman would have the presumption to attempt to teach the people of Pine Tree Knob her new faith; persuade her brothers to practise the new cult." The idea amused the villagers hugely.

All who had seen her admitted that she was pretty and wholesome to look at, and it was curiously interesting to see her read books like a man, but what use was there in women reading books. It only served to pit the woman against her husband, and moreover, made the mothers of the people disloyal to the teaching o[ the sages.

" I have seen," said the elder brother while talking with a sympathetic neighbor over the calamity that had befallen their home, "the seed of a parasite fall into the bark of the most beautiful tree, and spread its roots till the ugly shrub had sapped all the life of the tree. Such is the case with my beautiful sister; her mind is brilliant and her face winsome, so much so that I am sometimes almost persuaded that she is innocent and good, but a Christian idea has settled in her mind and, now, see what has been the result; a ruined home, a world of trouble for her, and trouble for all our clan."

It disturbed her family not a little that Martha mixed freely with all the women of the town, meeting them at the mountain stream where the daily washing was done; keeping her voice in tune with the rat-a-tat of the ironing stick, behind a closed door at night. She was so gentle and filled with so many acts of kindness that she was soon a favorite with the women of the village, and faces always brightened when Martha appeared. She was so unselfish and industrious, one could not reproach her. Her conversation was so queer one could not understand it. Martha was so interested when she told the story of her new faith that her cheeks were wet with tears and if she cried and laughed thus while discoursing, how could one help but be interested? It was not so pleasant. however, to listen to her telling one that one was a guilty sinner. Sinful? Who does not sin? But it was not pleasant to be reminded of it. Her visitors often asked her questions. Martha would answer and quickly propound another that staggered her questioner. The interest in Martha's teaching became general. They laughed at first and repeated her talks for each other's amusement, then they went to their husbands with many of the questions. Unsatisfactory answers piqued them to further inquiry. Finally, Martha

announced that she would ask and answer questions at a certain house during an evening of each week, and as the room adjoined another with a small opening between, if the men wanted to sit there out of sight but within range of her voice she would be willing.

Thus on each Sabbath evening Martha's discourses were listened to by a room crowded with women, and from the opening in the wall the clouds of tobacco smoke testified to the numbers of men who had come, as they told each other, just to hear the strange creature talk. The people were not aware of it but Martha was preaching and the interest of her women companions was deeper than it had been in any thing since their first baby was born. They giggled and asked questions; swung their babies on their backs, and when Martha knelt to pray, they laughed aloud, talked about their fall pickle making, and gossiped about their absent neighbors. They were astonished to hear Martha quote teachings from a book just like a man and a scholar. They returned to their homes chatting and repeating distorted fragments of what Martha had told them.

Martha fervently wished she were old and wrinkled so that she could sit in company with the men and teach them the truth as she had learned it. Then she sought out a pool of water and looked at the bright reflection, and laughed, and knelt in prayer for her husband.

At last, there was singing in the town each Sabbath morning and evening, and Martha went out on the mountainside above the town and listened. The noise was an inharmonious roar, but what mattered, men and woman were trying to sing Christian hymns.

Months past, the winter's cold, the spring's balmy air and life-giving hope, the rainy season and its dismal downpour passed and there was no news from her husband. She waited patiently, refusing to join other Christian women on their pilgrimages to other Christian communities for the privilege of prosecuting their studies of the new faith. News would certainly soon be at hand, for God had promised to answer prayer, and how earnestly she had prayed.

## CHAPTER XXIII. MARY AND ANNIE.

Again Pine Tree Knob was in the grip of mid-winter when a courier from the city of Pyeng-yang penetrated that mountain fastness and announced to the people that at a certain time a training class would be held in a great city to the south exclusively for women. The news stirred the town greatly.

"If this foolishness continues," said the people, "there will be schools organized for women in Korea, then what will become of the long

honored custom of exclusion of women? No, sir, no women should go, they are stubborn enough as it is. If they take to learning, what man will be able to manage his wife?';

Martha held a long consultation with Mary and Annie and as a result they secured the consent of their husbands to attend the class provided they kept the roads often frequented by Christians and stopped at such places as Christians were well known. They had never visited the great city and little realized how great was the distance, or how fierce was the cold of mid-winter. They greeted the privilege with delight Three hundred miles walk in the dead of winter, but what of that if they could only learn of Him?

'"Think of it," they said, "ten days given up to the study

of Him who had brought so much peace into their homes," and added in a burst of wonder, "A class for women!"

"What will you do with the baby?" asked Annie when plans had been talked over for the hundredth time.

"Take her," Martha replied.

"Of course," Annie said, going to the door and looking into the frost-filled air." We will take turns in carrying her. Dear little mite, a year old to-day," she added, turning and placing her head close to the baby's wee face where it was held tight to its mother's back by a broad band that covered it down to its tiny, restless feet. "You will have her baptized while we are there, won't you? and then she will have a name. How good it is to hear you call me, Annie! It is so different from being called, 'a thing,' or, 'the-inside-of-Min's-house.' How wonderful it is Mary that Christ died for women too. And, Mary, do you hear, Mary? we may be respected because we are His daughters!"

While Annie rattled on and talked gleefully of their intended trip, Mary was busy getting ready the little bundle for herself and baby. She laid away a clean white skirt and also a pretty hood for the baby. In the great city people are careful about their dress and one must look well. The Bible, hymn book, a pad of paper, and a curious foreign-made pencil were placed in the bundle last. The pad was then taken out and fondled affectionately. On its white pages she would write the wonderful story of the Christ. Her eyes grew moist as she held the treasure. She recalled how her husband had bought it of a Chinese in a market a hundred *li* to the south. She giggled aloud when she remembered how her husband had handed it to her and called her pretty. Until the day of her marriage she had never seen him, and with what terror she had become his wife! but that was five years ago; now she was glad. He had thought of her when he bought the tablet, and had handed the bundle to her with a bright face and

kind words.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Annie.

"See the baby smile," she replied and laughed again contentedly, and Annie joined in the laugh.

The next day Annie, and Mary with her baby strapped to her back, were on their way down the mountain. How fierce and pitiless was the cold!

"Have you your tablet and pencil?" asked Mary as they journeyed.

"Yes," Annie replied apologetically. "You learned so easily under Martha's teaching, while I have learned to write but one word. I can write the word Jesus, and tell it wherever I see it. I thought I would take the tablet and may be some one would write something on it for me."

They soon passed from the fiord leading from their mountain home and faced southward into the world they had never seen before. Many were the curious glances turned upon the two women. They generally passed the plain face or the elder and rested upon the one blooming with youth and animation. She carried upon her back a bundle that refused to be quiet and filled its mother with pride, making her buoyant and her step elastic. The wind was at their backs, but how it blistered the exposed parts of their faces whenever they met strangers and were compelled, from a sense of modesty, to turn their backs upon them and face the north.

"Where are you going?" was constantly asked at the inns. "We are going to find the Christ," would be the reply.

"Where is he?" an old man asked.

Annie looked at the questioner, at the sky, the snow covered mountains and replied, "Everywhere."

The old man gazed at Annie with a mystified look and muttered softly to himself, "Women are strange creatures."

The north wind blew steadily and the trees by the way seemed to snap and burst in the mighty grip of the frost. Mary slipped the body from her back, and opening her clothing, placed it next to her warm body. On the third day from home the two women replaced their sandals with new ones, but their cotton padded socks were worn through, and in the inn that night, Mary rolled on the floor in an agony or pain as her frosted feet slowly thawed out. They tore their head band in two and bound up their frosted feet and the next day limped on.

When Sunday came they rested and Mary read aloud from her new red covered Bible. She read, "Take up your cross daily and follow me." "Stop," said Annie, "what is that?"

"I don't know," replied Mary.

"I know, it is suffering for Him. Are we doing that, Mary?" Annie said glancing down at her frost bitten feet. "I don't know," said Mary, "but I think we are doing this for ourselves. I have read that, 'His yoke is easy and His burden is light.' We will ask the teachers, they know every thing."

On a certain evening when Mary and Annie sought the shelter of an inn they were startled by the presence of a dark face at the compound gate keenly scrutinizing them as they entered. The man was small and his face was burned and tanned by the winter wind to a dark brown and his black eyes sparkled with a disquieting eagerness. He appeared to be worn and thin from want and exposure. The two women passed to the inner court and stood a moment at the open door of the women's quarters while their hostess spread fresh mats on the floor. They overheard the voice of the stranger asking for shelter. He was telling how that he had money at home but had been unfortunate on the way and was reduced to beggary. But if the innkeeper would grant him food and shelter for the night, he, would, on his return home, immediately dispatch a courier back on his path and settle all bills. The innkeeper asked many questions. Some of them were embarrassing. "Why was he traveling north when his home was in the south?" The stranger answered readily that he had lost members of his family and was searching for them. The innkeeper looked out upon the white road and flying frost, then down at the miserably clad man, and with a half discourteous grunt that meant that he did not believe a word of it, opened the door for the wanderer.

Only a thin paper partition separated the room occupied by Mary and Annie from that of the male guests. A paper covered door with an ill fitting frame led into the opposite apartment. The loud voices of men could as easily be heard as if they were in the same room, while the smoke from their pipes poured through the cracks of the ill fitting door.

Unselfish Annie had persuaded Mary to lie down on the mat covering the warmest part of the floor. The arrangements placed herself nearest the wall of the adjoining room. Long after the inn had become quiet for the night, she lay awake, her mind plagued by the face of the stranger who plead poverty at the inn door. At last she fell asleep and was dreaming of her travels over the frozen road with the chill wind upon her, and the dear voices of Mary and the baby in her ears. Suddenly she was awakened by a voice that seemed to arise from beneath the floor. It was a subdued murmur of a man's voice, held and guarded for fear of reaching other ears, yet intense and impassioned carrying with it a world of yearning. Tears filled the eyes of Annie for the pathos of it.

' For a moment the voice slipped the leash of caution.

"Dear Lord," it said, "In the voice of this babe I hear their cry.

How cruel is the frost! Are they sheltered, oh, my Master?"

The heart of Annie went out to the stranger. She crept closer to the partition and when the murmurings ceased, she tapped lightly on the thin wall and whispered,

"Stranger do you believe in the Christ?"

The pause that followed was so long that Annie began to regret her boldness, when finally the reply came in a low voice.

"I, of all sinners, have been the most vile."

"But the work of Christ is to pardon,' said Annie.

"I know," came the low reply, "else had I not been here."

"You are then a beggar because you became a Christian,' observed Annie.

"True," was the reply, "still I am paying a debt of crime. Pardon is mine, but I still reap a dreadfu1 harvest from past sowing."

"You pronounced a name which I like well; it awoke me from sleep. My name is also Martha; whom did you call?"

She could hear the man start and catch his breath.

"So you were baptized too," he said after a long pause, "but her voice, the voice of Martha, was soft and sweet. "Pardon me for burdening you with my troubles and keeping you from your needed rest, but it is a comfort to meet one who knows my Master. As I came into the inn a young woman passed me carrying a babe on her back. She reminded me of my Martha and her bright laughter and I could not sleep."

"Sweet," Annie replied somewhat irrelevantly, "sure no one ever called my voice sweet, but who was your Martha?"

"I lost her and the baby."

"Lost her, how?"

"Threw her away."

"You must have been a fool, threw her away?"

"I have searched everywhere for her in heat and cold over mountains and across plains for hundreds of *li* to the East where her parents last lived. I have searched hundreds of homes of the rich and the poor—they are lost." Again he made a long pause, then added, eagerly, "Does the baby belong to you, and is it pretty?"

Annie looked a long time at the crack of the door before she replied. "Do you believe?" she asked.

"I have a Bible and hymn book,' he replied, and she heard him fumble the leaves.

Annie carried the candle to the door and opened a tiny crack. He understood and handed his Bible and hymn book through the door. She could not read but the bindings and shape of the books were familiar and

they made a companion of the stranger. “They are Christian books,” she said, “and it is well.” Then she started and held the open Bible to the light, hastily brushed her hand across the page, looked again with the leaf close to her face, and endeavored to separate one page from the other in places where they were stuck fast together.

“What is it,” she whispered excitedly, “What are the stains? Why, it is red blood, it is surely blood!”

“Stains of blood sacrifice,” he replied through the close fastened door.

“Whose blood?” she demanded.

“The blood of Martha,” he replied in a hoarse whisper. “She bled for the faith and became an angel, and I became a fiend. The shedding of innocent blood will open both heaven and hell. I may be able some day to tell you the long story. You are looking upon the stain of blood sacrifice. I am hunting the world through that I may find her and ask forgiveness. I have thought that maybe with God's pardon and also with the forgiveness of Martha there would be peace: nay, but why should I prattle of peace that has long since gone.”

· Annie did not understand “blood sacrifice.” She had heard the term used in connection with an ancient rite of the Church. Perhaps after all it was only some strange allegory. No, for here were the real blood stains, and she touched them again wonderingly. She was so long engaged in these meditations that he again addressed her:

“Did you say the baby was pretty?” The eagerness of his voice did not escape her.

“Wait,” said she, and unbolting the door passed the books to the hands of the stranger. She quietly crossed the room and picked up the sleeping child and presented her to the partially opened door. “See,” said she, “is she not pretty?”

He stretched out his hands, took the baby in his arms, and scanned its face eagerly while his hands shook with emotion. “Hush,” cautioned Annie, “you may wake its mother. It is a terrible thing for a mother to wake and not find her babe.

She loves it and loves her husband too as she loves her life.”

“That is woman's way,” he replied, still looking earnestly into the face of the sleeping child. “Yes, she is pretty, but not so pretty as the baby of Martha.”

“Hush,” she warned again, glancing across the room at Mary. “She is pretty, beautiful, and her voice,” she added severely, “is sweet too whenever she laughs or cries.”

“Yes, yes,” said the man hastily, “no doubt when she opens her

eyes, no doubt, no doubt."

"Tell me," said Annie with a severe tone in her voice, "Why do you sob and pray for Martha and her baby, why do your hands tremble when you touch Mary's baby? Men do not usually act in that way."

He raised his gaunt face to hers and in the dull light of the candle it appeared strangely pinched and thin from want and suffering?. "She is my wife," he said simply, "and I will find her," he added with a dauntless look coming into his thin face.

"If you were not a Christian I would tell you nothing though you cried your eyes out. To be a Christian is to be all. I may be able to gladden your heart with news for which you have labored so much. Are we not members of the same family?" she continued with exasperating delay, while his eyes sparkled with a deepening fire.

"Speak, woman, speak! What have you to say?" His words came quick, imperious.

"They call me Annie sometimes to avoid confusion but I was baptized Martha," she said in her slow guarded whisper. "I chose this name because it was worn by the most beautiful woman I ever saw. She is good and true as she is beautiful and she has a baby too."

" Where, where?" cried the stranger excitedly.

Annie seized the child, bolted the door and ran with the babe to Mary's side. The latter had been awakened by the stranger's unguarded cry, and was looking with a startled parting of the lips at Annie. Sleepers on the other side of the partition were also stirring, but the stranger was too excited to notice his fellow guests. "Tell me," he called through the closed door, "Where is she? Where do they live?"

Annie was in a panic, she had raised the inn, and hastened to reply to hide so scandalous a thing. "Pine Tree Knob," said she, "three hundred *li* to the north."

"I know, I know," he called back, and there were hasty movements as one preparing to leave. Presently the outer door opened and to the astonishment of his fellow guests Mr. Cho stepped out into the cold night.

"Thank you," he called, "God sent you to me. Ah-a-a, I will find her."

Annie listened in dismay to the sound of his footsteps as he moved off into the bitter cold. 'To think," said Annie to Mary, "I may have sent him out to his death, to freeze by the way."

Mary and Annie had been in the class for two days. Mary had not written a word on her tablet, and Annie had written the only one she knew. That night they discussed the matter over and over again.

"The Church is such a great place full of echoes, and they talk so

fast, I can not even begin to write," said Mary.

"It is all right when you just try to listen," said Annie.

The next day Mary listened and the following night she took down her tablet and wrote nearly all night. She wrote till the light filled the east, then caressed the closely written pages before seeking the warm mat by the side of her pink cheeked baby. After that she listened days, and nights wrote with feverish anxiety for fear or losing a word of the wonderful story.

"I must lake it all back lo my husband and to the women of the north," she said, "and my baby must learn too, bye and bye."

The class ended and the two women prepared to return to their mountain home. Their frost-bitten feet and faces had healed and the baby never seemed so plump and happy. She had laughed the class through to the despair of the teachers and many of Mary's classmates, but Mary did not know that. The baby was happy and she was more than happy.

They turned their faces into the bitter north wind. It had been rough coming, how much more so returning, and each day they longed for the end of the journey and the warm rooms of their own homes. Under shelter at night they rehearsed all they had seen and heard.

"How short the time seemed," said Mary.

"Yes," said Annie, "but when one stops to think it over it seems like years; at times it seems almost to have driven the memory of all the past from my mind."

The fourth day out the baby became fretful and began to cough. Three days she was ill, indeed, and at the inn, Mary no longer consulted her tablet, and Annie, fearing ill results from the neglect, stowed the precious paper in her own bundle. The last night of the journey, Mary placed the baby on the hottest spot on the inn floor and hovered over her with fear-filled eyes. Late the next afternoon they were hastening up the long fiord of their mountain home. Mary, having said nothing all day, now hastened her steps till her breath came in short sharp gasps, and Annie almost ran to keep at her heels.

Suddenly Mary paused:

"Annie, Annie, Oh, Annie!" she cried, with terror-filled voice.

"Yes," Annie gasped with sudden apprehension and shrank away from her companion in fear of the presence of the King of Terrors, and dropped behind several paces. Mary noticed the act and the muscles of her face grew suddenly tense and a hard look came into her eyes. Presently Annie pushed forward and touched her arm.

"I believe in the Christ, Mary, and am not afraid. You are so tired, let me take it. I will place it close to my own body, and I will warm it

though it be many times cold."

"It is mine," Mary said, her face softening and tears filling her eyes, "though I thank you, I will carry it."

The way was rough and Mary had carried the burden a long time; slipping, she fell and would have lain by the way-side from exhaustion. Then Annie opened her garments and placed the tiny body next her own warm one.

When they reached Mary's home it was closed. Her husband had gone to a distant market, and would not return for some days. The two women entered with their silent burden. They built a fire under the floor; and through the night, the neighbors listened wonderingly at the stifled sounds of moaning that crept out into the wind-swept street past Mary's house.

At last the light of dawn crept over the mountain peaks and through Mary's paper windows; she was kneeling by the side of the little body wringing her hands.

"Oh dear, dear, dear," she wailed, "I went to find the Christ, and I lost my baby."

Annie opened the door and looked out, "Glorious!" she cried,

"What is glorious?" asked Mary. "It fills the heaven and floods the world, Mary." "What floods the world, Annie?"

For answer Annie swung the door wide open and the rising sun poured upon Mary and her baby at her knees.

"The glory of the Christ fills the land like the sun, Mary, and it fills my soul," cried Annie、

The drawn look of suffering on Mary's face softened and the tears fell freely.

"They baptized her Lucy," she murmured, "she was so sweet, so different from any other baby, and I wanted her so." After a pause she added, "He has taken her. What did you write on your tablet, Annie?" "Jesus," Annie replied.

## CHAPTER XXIV. A WANDERER.

Mr. Cho raced out into the bitter cold night with little thought of its peril, obsessed with the idea that he was only three hundred *li* from Martha and would not stop till he had found her and the baby. On he ran, the keen wind cutting his face, till exhaustion compelled him to pause. He looked out across the fields and up to the towering mountains beyond where millions of sparkling diamonds reflected the moonlight. The wind had

sunk into silence and not a sound save his own hard breathing could he hear; the sentinel-like mountain peaks pierced the icy sky, and the dark projections of grotesquely formed boulders frowned down from the snow whiteness. There were no trees to cover the nakedness of the plain and mountain; and he stood alone in a vast waste of death. The cold pierced his clothing and cut his face like a knife, while frost gathered on his beard and eyebrows. As soon as he could regain his breath he again pushed forward. Martha's face beckoned him, the pleading look last seen when he drove her from the door was ever in the path before him. He was weak from long journeyings and recent illness. and lack of food. There was a curious singing in his ears. He thought it was Martha's voice in song and he stopped to listen; or, was it the baby crying, crying for him? He pictured Martha in his home as he had seen her, warmly housed: he would soon be there and sit with her and the baby on the soft cushioned floor: he would watch the lamp light flicker over her sweet face, and then they would gel down on their knees and thank God together.

The snow under his feet gave out a harsh crunching sound, and he stopped to listen. It irritated him as wholly inharmonious with the silence and the pleasant picture he had painted; he would not allow the fretful complaining snow beneath his feet to defeat him in this race. He would find Martha and find warmth and comfort though the cold did take on a voice of menace.

Just as the moon settling to the horizon filled the way of Mr. Cho with enormous shadows a glow in the east announced the miracle of a new day, the sun arose turning the frosted world into dazzling brilliancy and its rays warmed the road of the wanderer.

Mr. Cho passed an inn and some one gave him a morsel of food, but he was not aware of the friendly act; he was obsessed with the one idea that he must find his lost wife and make restitution. Hunger and fatigue were the background of his sufferings, its intensity relieved by a moment's rest or a bit of food caused no expression of gratitude as it was so infinitely trivial to what seemed to be the world problem that rested upon his shoulders. Once Mr. Cho had been a coward but now suffering and a great resolve had driven fear from his soul.,

But long journeys, exposure and cold were too much for him. As the winter's sun warmed the way his mind took on strange fantasies. He sought for his wife and their babe in every nook and when he reached a bend in the road he would hasten to get a view beyond with the expectation of seeing them.

Many months thereafter strange tales were told of a small dark man searching the towns of the great highway for a lost woman and her

baby. He searched the compounds of the rich and poor alike and when forcibly ejected he often assumed the necessity of a second search. People listened to his story as they would to the tales of the demented. News preceded him from village to village and they feared his arrival and were glad when his thin face and piercing eyes turned from their town.

When the sun began to sink low in the west and the frosty air again bit through his clothing, Mr. Cho found a seat on the steps leading into an inn. He was muttering imprecations against Bali and a certain preacher who had stolen his wife and child. The inn keeper attracted by the voice outside his door stepped out and looked down upon the wanderer. "Curse you, Bali, and your black arts," said Mr. Cho looking up unsteadily into the face of the man above him, then he waved his hand as would a posturing dancing girl and sang "Happy Day." "Happy Day," repeated the inn keeper, "Hey, in there," he called, "come out and look at this Happy Day." The inn emptied itself into the street and a curious crowd gathered around Mr. Cho. "Crazy," said some, "sick," said others. "Sick people die," said the inn keeper. "He is on your doorstep," said a neighbor, "he is your man."

"Not on your life," fairly should that gentleman. "I didn't invite him here. Sick in my house, die in my house? Never." The commotion called people from neighboring houses. "This is the affair of the town," declared the inn keeper. "Not this town but the next," some one shouted. "Ah, the next town," was the unanimous vote.

Two young men were persuaded to prepare a stretcher of an old mat, and rolling Mr. Cho upon it they bore him away, while Mr. Cho sang snatches of Christian hymns. "Peace, perfect peace," he repeated over and over, and ended with "Halleluiah, Amen."

"Must have learned English," commented one of his bearers. 'Wonder if it is catching," asked the other. "What, English?" "No, his sickness.' "Very likely it is," consoled the other, "and doubtless we shall die of it."

On reaching the outskirts of the next village the bearers laid their burden down while one went forward to reconnoiter. As it was growing dark and no one was seen moving about the street they carried their load to the center of the town which was simply a thin line of houses stretched out on both sides of the road. They left Mr. Cho on the litter and placed his bundle of books and sandals under his head, then they crept from the town.

A dog set up a cry and other curs of the village took up the call. So vigorous and persistent were they that doors were swung open and heads peeped out to see the cause of the commotion. Mr. Cho began to sing

"Happy Day" again in a voice filled with many croaks and squalls. Soon he was surrounded with a group of jabbering curious people and barking dogs. A light was brought and held down close to the face of the sick man.

"That is right," said Mr. Cho, "bring a light that I may see the face of Martha and the baby,—that is right."

"Raving crazy," some one said.

The villagers withdrew to the only inn of the town and held a consultation. They concluded to carry him to the next village. They would carry him down the mountain rather than up; while it would be a little further, yet it would be easier. They persuaded a young gigantic fellow to take the sick man on his back. While this discussion was in progress a little girl on her way home from the farther end of the village passed the sick man and heard him repeating, "Happy Day." She ran as fast as her legs would carry her and called up her father.

"A sick man," she called, "is lying out on the street singing "Happy Day."

The father followed his daughter back to where lay the unfortunate and arrived just as the huge youth was preparing to get the sick man on his back. "Wait a moment," said the newcomer. In the light of a paper lantern, he examined Mr. Cho's face attentively. "Who are you?" he asked.

"Who am I? I am the baby's father," said Mr. Cho, trying to raise himself on his elbow and looking unsteadily into the face of his questioner. When he lay back, his head did not rest on the bundle, and the stranger stooped and took it up. The villagers were glad enough that anyone took interest in the sick man; glad that anyone would volunteer any responsibility that would relieve them. The stranger took out the Bible and Hymn Book and looked them over carefully.

He bent gently over Mr. Cho who had again begun to sing "Happy Day." "Are you a Christian?" he asked.

"Yes, she is that,' said Mr. Cho, "she is a Christian, so is Bali, but I can't find her. I think I put her in the little red book. You will find her in Mark's Gospel, Mary and Martha, you know." Then he sat up and looked the stranger in the face and asked very solemnly, "Do you think she will forgive me?"

The stranger took the bundle in one hand and motioning to the young giant, lifted Mr. Cho to his feet and thus they carried him to the stranger's house and placed the sick man on a warm floor in a small room.

"This sick man is a Christian." said the good Samaritan to the neighbors who crowded the door. "We Christians care for each other and for all people who are in distress." The people were content that it should be so.

The cold of winter was gone and the balmy air of spring had filled the world with the music of new life and every branch and twig was straining to put forth bud and leaf. Korea had shaken herself loose from the sleep of winter, and the denizens of hill and plain had poured forth to the year's joyous toil. The sun poured down upon the face of n brown thatched cottage on the outskirts of a small village and warmed a lonely, sharp visaged man who sat on a rough mat outside the door. The man was waiting for a reply to a message to the south land. He had spent his strength and needed money. In the past he had made his world suffer because of his greed for money which he really did not need, now he needed it much.

Mr. Cho's host had informed him with Asiatic ingenuousness that a wife driven from one's home would most likely after so long a period have found security with some other protector, for, indeed, how could she do otherwise. Mr. Cho had better, therefore, return homeward as that would be the direction toward peace. Once the doctrine of the fatalist would have brought to him the quietness of surrender and he would have struggled no more. But now his new faith knew no surrender till a great wrong should be righted, and back in the soul of him was an undying passion for the ones he had lost, a passion which at one time would have driven him to unmeasured excesses. Now it was an iron of resolve. He, therefore, waited for his messenger. He had figured out with the nicety of a mathematician jus t the points in the road where the man should be each day, and, with a sigh of regret, added one for each rainy day, but his skill in figures failed to measure the personal equation of the messenger, his indifference to haste or the many friends the messenger had alone the route.

Mr. Cho had never been a model pupil of Confucius. The impurturbable calm of that cult had never entered his spirit, and his storm-tossed soul now raged within him. He looked west-ward through the warm sunshine upon a world swiftly covering its stark nakedness with green and the riotous colors of spring, but he saw nothing, nor heard the music of joyous life that echoed about him. His eyes were fixed upon the opening in a grove that lined the road, at a point where his messenger had disappeared weeks before. Then he lifted his eyes to the hills beyond, where they were dotted with a multitude of mounds. “Very fitting, and quite just should I lie there with that multitude,” he murmured, “I have consigned others in times past to the yellow valley and the dark mound on the hillsides, why should I cherish hope?” he added in supreme scorn of self. His mind turned back in a remorseless review of his past. Step by step and in exquisite pain he slowly traveled the long way that led to the supreme act of crime when he aimed at the life of his wife. Then his new

faith arose before him and the hard lines of his face softened. As he thus sat one hand rested upon the long staff on which he had leaned when attempting to walk and in the review of his past his hand had seized the staff till his fingers were blistered in the grip.

Presently voices came from the wood, familiar voices which set loose new sensations of pain. He raised his wounded fingers and looked at them in a detached way and his mind approved of the wounds. The voices mingled with the footfall of men emerging from the wood, yet Mr. Cho did not look up, his face whitened and his body stiffened while he still gazed at his wounded hand. Presently Pastor Kim, and Bali, stood before him. He raised his eyes in response to their hearty triumphant greetings, then moistening his lips said, "Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

## CHAPTER XXV. MARTHA HEARS GOOD NEWS

It was Martha's tender solicitude that finally brought peace to the heart of the grief-stricken friend Mary. Martha alone knew of the Christian burial rites; it did not seem out of place to see her stand with tear-stained cheeks before the little bier and hear her gentle voice pronounce the awe inspiring words which commit the dead to the ground till time shall be no more. For the first time in the North Country during the history of man, childhood was dignified and honored with a religious burial rite; the people talked of it wonderingly and pronounced it good.

While Martha's heart burned with desire to hear news from the South, she refrained from making enquiry till the solemn duties were over. The burial was at sunrise to harmonize with the ideas and customs observed through so many generations. At the close Martha walked with Mary and Annie in the company of women down the mountain side to the town. At Mary's door, Martha's hand held the latch and she smiled down on Mary as the sympathetic townswomen trouped by with their kindly farewell to suffering Mary. Each one in passing raised her eyes from the face of Mary to the one filled with self effacing goodness above her. They thought of the dead babe, the suffering mother, and Martha's face, and said it was all good. Martha opened the door. Mary and Annie entered. She led Mary to a warm place on the floor and seated her beneath a paper covered window where the sun blazed through the frost smitten air upon its white surface.

The light glowed down upon Mary and she turned her drawn face to its rays, as will a flower long immersed in darkness, and a far away

look came into her pain-filled eyes. Martha and Annie retired in silence to the opposite side of the small room. Mary was again traveling through the frost with the silent burden on her back, again longing for the nestling head and touch of the baby hands. Her unseeing eyes traveled from the window across the room to the face of Martha and rested there as if held by a sense of mutual concern until intelligent comprehension crept into her eyes and her lips formed the word, "Martha"; the latter crossed the floor on hands and knees and Mary whispered "He believes." Martha took Mary silently in her arms while a great joy burst upon her soul.

Not many days thereafter the south wind swept the hill free from snow and soon the life of early spring stirred and fingered its way over plain and mountain, and the world thrilled with the miracle of a resurrected year.

Each day Martha arose with the twilight and hastened down into the fiord up which her husband must come to reach the town. As the days passed and he did not arrive the buoyancy faded from her and she drooped as a frost bitten plant. Her lips smiled back at all who spoke to her but her eyes did not smile, they grew larger and a heavy ring encircled them. Her voice was gentle; but her lips were sealed as to the gnawing cankerous fear of her heart. She doubted not that her husband had flung himself into the bitter cold of that night with a frenzied desire to reach her and make right all the wrong. His delay whispered of a tragedy beneath the blistering cold of that star-lit night, where the drifting snow lightly trod upon that she loved, covered it over and left it in silence, a silence unbroken by the south winds and the stirring life of spring. In the ingenuousness of the Asiatic mind, many discussed, in the presence of Martha, the tale of Annie and Mary concerning the attempt of Mr. Cho to reach their mountain village, and plainly declared that in their judgment he was dead and there was no use thinking of the matter longer. If dead, then it was the proper thing for Martha to get another husband, and the sooner it was done the better would it be for her father's clan. They even told her of men who might be willing to accept of her. To all this Martha made no reply. She made her daily trips to the head of the fiord and remained scanning the south till weary, or duties compelled her return. The people were perplexed at such silence and conduct. Till tales were repeated of ancient constancy of wife for her dead husband, then they spoke of Martha with awe. "Would she indeed join him in the yellow valley?" they asked.

For weeks Martha had revolved in her mind a plan. She did not want to believe her husband was dead. Perhaps he had returned to his home for funds. Did not Annie say he appeared destitute? Was it not her

duty to hasten to him, for as long as he lived was she amenable to any other on earth for her acts? She knew her brother and relatives would under no consideration consent to her return alone. The Clan had been scandalized in her coming, there must be no second act of that character.

She made close enquiry of the road leading to Rocky Ridge where was the home of Pastor Kim. Once there the matter would be easily settled. She could learn the necessary facts, and from that point she could forward news to her husband and await his coming.

She discovered that she must travel back upon the road she came for at least five days, and then turn southward eight more to reach the home of Mr. Kim. The baby had grown much since she came to her ancestral home and she would be heavy, so heavy at the end of a day's travel! When Martha thought of the danger of traveling alone among strangers she was appalled, and through many a night stared up into the darkness weighing her responsibility to the authority of her brother, who she knew would not hesitate to punish her into submission to his wishes, and the real peril of the road: against her duty to husband and baby and the call of her aching heart. Finally she went to stupid Annie and poured out her soul. "While Annie would never read though she studied a hundred years she never erred in questions of right or wrong," said Martha.

Martha found her friend sitting on the floor of her home industrially rattling the ironing sticks, with a Bible, pencil, and white tablet placed at her side, her eyes shifting from the garment she was beating into glossy whiteness to the word, "Jesus,' she had laboriously written all over her tablet. Martha entered the room so quietly Annie did not notice her till the former unobtrusively took her seat on the opposite side of the ironing block and picked up two ironing sticks. Annie would have sprung to her feet in protest, but Martha reached for the hand that held the clubs and pulled Annie to the floor and with lips quivering with a smile struck the ironing block a tentative blow; her friend laughed and accepted the invitation and immediately the swift falling clubs were merrily challenging the neighborhood to their morning labor. One garment followed another in rapid succession till the task was over. With the intuition of a child of Asia, Annie sensed a crisis in the affairs of her friend, and her eyes frequently shot a glance of inquiry into the other's sad face. When the ironing clubs pealed out their last long roll and throb, Martha knew Annie understood, and she quickly told her struggle over the problem of her future.

Annie picked up her tablet and for a long time seemed bent on reading and re-reading the one word she had so many times written. She then went to the door and swung it open and looked up on the mountain

side where her husband and neighbors were struggling to wrest a living from its grudging soil. She stood in silence a long time while a passionate song of a sky lark poured from above over the town and filled the hut. Annie finally turned into the room and went to the wall where was fixed a cupboard projecting outward over the kitchen fire place. For some time her hand moved about in the darkness with uncertainty as if their owner was waging a warfare of debate. Presently she drew from the dark a small bag of coin and crossing the room hastily, she placed it on the ironing block opposite which Martha still sat watching the curious movements of her friend. Then Martha placed her head down on the block and wept long.

"It is mine," said Annie, "and I can give it to whom I will. My father was a miner," she explained, "and he hoarded a bit of gold dust. Soon after he died my mother died also and this is mine. My husband has always respected my ownership. Not long ago, feeling that the recent silver coinage would be less easily lost, he turned the dust into coin and brought it back to me. Take it. Are we not Christians? I know you will return it some day it you can, if you can not, that also will be well."

An hour later Martha passed through the gate leading through the corn stalk fence which surrounded Annie's home. She paused a moment to listen to the voice of stupid Annie singing a Christian song to the only tune she knew, one of her own invention that fitted every kind of hymn. "Better than real music," she said, "just like good Annie."

A week later, on the fifteenth day of the fourth moon, while the brilliant moonlight poured upon mountain and valley, two women might have been seen skirting the outer fringe of the village on their way to the head of the mountain fiord. Annie insisted upon accompanying Martha to the main road five miles away. They finally knelt at the forks of the road and gazed into each other's eye while they lifted their hearts to Him who cares for the helpless.

"Oh, my Father," said Martha, "this seems light and good for the sake of husband and baby; Annie thinks it good; keep me from evil hands, my Father." "Amen," said Annie.

Shortly afterwards Martha with her baby tied to her back disappeared down the road beneath the shadows of the willows.

It was nearly noon before inquiries were made for Martha in her old mountain home, but her absence excited little concern till her brother and fellow laborers came in from the field at night. The town was then in commotion. Every Christian home was visited in the search. Mary and Annie visited Martha's home and Mary was in tears, but stupid Annie said nothing. The Christians and many others turned out to assist their townsman search the country for his lost sister. The next day they

extended their search to the forks of the road at the foot of the fiord and later a hundred li southward. Enquiry from travelers coming from long distances gave no information of a lost woman.

"What," said a pedestrian, "searching for a lost woman? and are you fools enough to think you could find a lost widow? Pretty, eh?" They understood what he meant and many had already discussed the probability of her seizure as a wife for some one living at a distance who had learned of Martha's charms. Martha's brother stormed about the village, neglecting his fields, furious at the insult offered him and his clan. He made a long journey to the magistrate and petitioned redress.

"Only a widow?" the magistrate asked.

"But she was my sister," declared the man, "and my name has been insulted. I demand satisfaction, sir."

"Did you look into all the village wells? I have noticed that young pretty widows have a habit of throwing themselves into wells, and over mountain cliffs," the magistrate drawled. "You are sure you have looked carefully? Do you not think it would appear better for the dignity of your clan and better for the peace of your town to assume there was an accident, that she fell from a cliff, and the wolves did the rest, or something of that sort? Of course, now that you have brought to my notice the facts concerning your loss, I shall order my runners to keep their eyes open on all their business trips in my territory. Usually in such cases the captor is willing to make a large settlement in cash for the woman if she turns out a good house-keeper. You are possessed of some property I take it, and if the man who stole your sister is some poor vagabond, a little consideration on your part may help towards his punishment. You understand, of course, that we usually assume that widows are much better off married to who ever may be willing to accept of them. Still, as I said, I may be able to do something for the dignity of your clan provided we are able to find the widow."

The petitioner began to wish he had not attempted to consult the law, and hastened from the Magistracy as soon as he could politely withdraw. He returned home and announced that his sister was either dead or stolen and carried beyond his power or the power of the Magistrate to recover her, and the fatalistic East dismissed the matter as beyond remedy. The question lingered long in the mind of the Christian community with much sorrow and regret. Stupid Annie alone made no reference to Martha and continued with cheerful industry to write the one word she knew whenever opportunity afforded.

In the meantime Martha was traveling nights and biding daytimes among the graves that surround ancient cemeteries which adorned the

hillsides above all the villages she passed. On the third day the food Annie had prepared for her gave out, so she traveled during the day and bought food at the inns. She was regarded with so much interest that she re tired to the hillside during the midafternoon and arose with the darkness and traveled all night. Thereafter she traveled occasionally at night to discourage search by people she passed on the road. Late on the sixth night of her journey she crept into the women's quarters of a certain inn and asked for shelter and food.

She and the baby were examined in the usual critical curiosity by the wife of the inn-keeper. Martha announced that she was a Christian and was going to meet her husband. Her hostess shook her head disapprovingly.

"You Christians," she said, "run strange chances, your audacity is amazing. Have you organized, as have the Peddler's Guild, to mete out swift revenge upon any one who harms your number? How dare you, madam, thus travel the road alone; or are the Christian men so degenerate that they are oblivious as to what happens to their wives?"

Martha was too weary to answer these oft-repeated questions but enquired regarding the road that lead to Rocky Ridge. As she had expected, her road turned from this point southward. Her supper over, she and her baby were soon fast asleep.

Before daylight Martha was awakened by the bustling about of the inn-keeper's wife as she prepared the morning meal for her many guests. Murtha sat up and prepared to leave immediately after her meal of millet.

"The biggest one you ever saw," confided her hostess.

"Biggest what?" asked Martha.

'Biggest man," she replied. "Came here, he says, to carry away a sick man. It would be a hard day for you did you fall into his hands, so take my word and beware. It he takes the road south you go north for your life, that is the best advice I can give you. See," she added, "peep through the hole in the paper door. He is there in the yard now."

Martha placed her eye to the opening in the door covering and what she saw set her teeth to chattering with fear. The colossal form of Bali stalked about the yard with impatient step, waiting for his morning meal. The inn-keeper's wife had stepped out into the kitchen and did not see Martha's agitation. When she returned Martha was sitting on the floor, her face as white as the jacket she wore.

"Sick?" asked her hostess.

"Not ill," replied Martha with her ear close to the outer door endeavoring to catch the words of Bali who was conversing with another person who had been hid from her view by an ugly mud chimney. "I was

listening," she continued in a whisper, "to the words of the giant. I thought he said he was hunting for some one. Do you think Madam, while you laid out their meal and arranged their tables you could find out the nature of their journey? Perhaps you could learn their profession. At least learn the direction they will take, for of a truth I wish not to journey their way."

"Sure I will," replied the hostess, "ask them straight if necessary."

A half hour later she reappeared. "Found out all about them," she said. "What I could not catch by eaves-dropping I found out by asking. Not one giant, two of them, large enough to be brothers, but they don't look alike. Both going north, so you need have no fear. They are on their way to a town called Pine Tree Knob, hunting for a runaway woman. She belongs to neither one, but for some reason they want her. I didn't listen for any thing more. Have listened to those tales so often I know in advance what they are."

"What?" Martha asked and waited with parted white lips, "what is it you know?"

"And you don't know, you innocent thing? Had you known, then would you not have taken the road alone to tempt such creatures as they. Do you not know that men are created to tear and rend the weak and helpless? What would you silly butterfly do under his mighty grasp. He would roar with delight, while he pulled off your gaudy wings. Blessed is the woman who most speedily grows old and ugly, for all this is woman's lot. Ah," she added with a tone of disapproval, "don't look so frightened. Did I not say he traveled north? Unless you, indeed, seek him he will not find you, he has other game.'

Martha remained in the inn long after her hostess declared the giants had disappeared over the mountain road to the north, then she left in great haste and fairly ran from the town, and many curious eyes followed her down the street. As she sped out into the narrow valley she paused and looked back at the town and up at the distant mountain. On the divide three men were standing, and one of them, a tall figure, was shading his eyes and gazing in her direction. At the sight weakness overcame her and she sat down by the way trembling with fear. Her staggering step seemed to satisfy the watcher, for he presently turned with his companions and disappeared over the pass.

The night Mr. Cho bade good night to his friends at the inn and returned to the roof that had so long sheltered him, he passed the figure of a woman who was carrying a babe on her back and fled almost into the gutter in the effort to avoid him. At other times he had invariably followed young mothers with their babies till he had peered into their faces. The practise had frequently caused stern rebuke from some male member of

the community. Now for the first time on the long journey, because of the gladness of his heart, he passed her by, the pause and mechanical stare he gave her added speed to her feet, and he absently watched her enter the yard of the inn in quest of the woman's quarters. The late moon was slowly climbing the distant mountain and the long rays of light were fingering their way over the ridge and down upon the silent village, but the deep shadows of the forest still covered the town and Mr. Cho failed to recognize his lost wife and child. On the morrow he would travel to the north where, according to the information of that cold night so long ago and confirmed by Pastor Kim, lived the one he sought. Further, he would have with him two dauntless friends, one of whom had for many years been a hunter of men, under whose keen eyes every foot print had a meaning. If Martha still 1ived he would soon find her, and then how good it is to live the life of a Christian!

On the following day, under the spur of Mr. Cho's voice, the chair bearers covered in one day twice the distance made by Martha during the same period. How strong were his companions. It was a tonic to look into their faces, and what a world of good news they had to tell. Mr. Cho's property was safe, and he had not cared whether it were safe or not. The devil on the salt-marsh was preaching and all his sermons were on "heaven." His ugly face and puffing, rumbling roar, before he opened his lips lo speak, frightened his listeners into silence, but when he spoke he talked of gentle things, Bali rehearsed the activities of the hermit with infectious delight. It was evident that the hermit was the most admired man of Bali's acquaintance. "Not afraid of men, devils or the magistrates," Bali said.

Bali related how after becoming a Christian he had presented himself to the Magistrate to receive in his person punishment for evil deeds where he was unable otherwise to make restitution, but in spite of all that he could say the Magistrate believed it was a ruse to involve him in more trouble. The only result was many presents and many protests of personal regard. He had gone to the Governor who had more knowledge of the way of Christians and he had finally promised to examine carefully into Bali's history and would surely punish not only to the satisfaction of Bali but also the full satisfaction of all magistrates and good citizens who had been wronged by the robber chief. This had occurred not long before Bali left, as it had required a world of labor to meet the demand of his conscience as well as his personal freedom to do so. Caution on the part of the Governor had caused delay in making Bali's arrest. This remarkable robber carried so much power and now it was possible he was associated with the foreigner and had become more formidable than ever. Time

would tell, and the East is patient. Bali knew that the time was near when the deadly hand of unrestrained officialdom would be laid upon his person. He smiled as he talked of the day when he would be led forth from the governor's prison. Then there would be a flash of steel in the sunlight,—and the end.

"l can see," he mused, "that He is a God of justice as well as of mercy. I carry with me the work of His blessed mercy. Coward would I be and deserving of my own utmost contempt, and, I think, of His also, did I for a moment shrink from His justice." "Think not that it makes me sad," said he on one occasion, reviewing the matter with Mr. Cho. 'To be sad would mean complaint, to complain would be the whimper of a coward, no, no, I rejoice with exceeding great joy," and he laughed a great deep-chested laugh, the laugh of a conqueror capable of thrilling the world with his power. Pastor Kim's face glowed in response and Mr. Cho slid from his chair and ran to Bali's side forgetful that he had been an invalid. The giant picked up the smaller man and placed him back in the chair half playfully, half gravely.

On the second day Bali picked up news that deepened the gravity of his face. He learned that a Christian woman in the town of Pine Tree Knob had recently been spirited away.

He said nothing to his companions and on the last day of their journey he left before daylight and by noon was in the village of their destination six hours ahead of his fellow travelers. Announcing himself a Christian, he had immediate access to all the facts they knew concerning Martha. His enquiries were sharp, almost imperious. He visited Mr. Yang the brother of Martha and pushed his enquiries with dauntless energy till he seemed to dominate the town. Learning that Martha had last been seen with Annie, it was not long before he had all the facts concerning her flight and destination.

Three miles out from the town he met his companions, and walking by the side of Mr. Cho rehearsed all he had learned. Mr. Cho lay back in his chair white and weak. When he arrived he was carried to the ancestral home of Martha. Annie immediately sought him out and told him all she knew of Martha's flight. The story was not without comfort. That night half of the village gathered in the great open yard of their host, and Mr. Cho told the story of his conversion, Martha's faith and fortitude, and his own long eventful wanderings to find her. It was a long story, and many were sobbing when he closed, and Martha's brother announced to the gathered throng that he was going to serve Martha's God.

The next day the three men were hastening southward to overtake Martha. Mr. Kim was glad the road led him to his own home, while Bali,

the ex-robber, was speeding with a light heart to face the king of all terrors.

Six days after leaving the village where Martha's path had crossed that of her husband they re-entered the village for the night. The coolies refused to trave1faster and it was only by a promise of great pay that they were induced to proceed the next day. The inn-keeper's wife was voluble with many descriptions of Martha's appearance and all that she had said, how she had seen Bali and had raced down the street in fear.

Fear of harm to his wife put urgency into the voice of Mr. Cho as he urged his chair-coolies ahead the next day. He promised them rewards so large, each man strove as greed will make men strive.

"Good,' said Mr. Cho at the end of the second day. "Two hundred and seventy li. To-morrow night we will overtake her," and he laughed. "Yesterday a man met her on the road and she was still safe. One more day," and he laughed again.

Over-speeding was too much for the coolies and the next day noon they refused to move from the inn. Money would not stir them, and no woman in the land was of sufficient value to have them do so. That afternoon Mr. Cho trudged at the side of his friends, surprised that he was not without endurance.

## CHAPTER XXVI. BLOOD SACRIFICE

Martha viewed the distant mountains with longing eagerness from the moment of starting in the early morning twilight. At noon-time they seemed as far away as when she started. She learned by inquiry that the village called Rocky Ridge lay at the foot of the mount on the opposite side. It must, therefore, be the home of Pastor Kim. Once there she would be among Christian friends, and safe from her persuers. But how slow her progress! The road was little wider than a foot-path. It had been worn down by the ceaseless tread of the sandaled feet of men, and washed out by the floods of summer till in many places the bank on both sides towered fifteen feet above Martha's head. In other places the hard rock had resisted the wear of feet and rains, and showed nothing more than a well-worn surface. When Martha came to one of these deep ravines she walked rapidly and made good progress, but when she reached the open section of the road she made circuitous journeys to avoid being seen. Before again plunging into a ravine, she would carefully view the road in both directions, and if any one were approaching she would remain concealed till the road was again free. Thus was her journey made painfully slow.

In the late afternoon, when the shadows of the mountain stretched far out on the plain, and the deepening shades startled the pigeon and the quail from cover, Martha knelt at

the foot of the mountain and thanked her God for safety. Far up the mountainside the smoke of a village unfretted by mountain breezes curled directly skyward. “Our last stop and then safety” said Martha to her babe, while she gazed at the distant smoke. “We are tired, you and I,” she added, looking into the child's brown eyes, “and the mountain would be perilous at night.”

Two hours later Martha and her babe stood! on the outskirts of the town waiting for the darkness to deepen. She watched from behind a hedge till the outlines of the houses disappeared, and the town appeared as one indefinable mass. She then entered the village, and hastened her steps into a run, and looked sharply from side to side till she saw an inn where stood a huge ox from whose back was being removed a load of brushwood. She slipped unobserved around the animal into the inner court of the inn. She then stood for some time in the deep shadows to recover her breath and to plan for her next move. She waited, half stooping, peering into the darkness, as some wild hunted thing, every sense alert for danger. The babe, from instinct, sensing the mother’s fear, nestled closed to her back. Suddenly a door was flung open and the light from within streamed out full upon her. She fled for the compound gale, but barely missed a collision with a man who was opening it to make entrance for his ox. She ran back to the woman's quarters and was confronted by the wife of the inn-keeper. She was a slatternly looking woman with a shrewd race, made hard through long contract with the public.

Without a word she motioned Martha to the door of the woman's quarters, and swinging the door open let the light stream out upon her guest and deliberately looked Martha over from her pretty face to her shabby sandals. She carefully examined the wide-eyed bundle on Martha's back; then with a grunt, suggesting that she always took the world as she found it, motioned Martha to follow, and leading the way to the warmest part of the floor, gruffly told her guest to sit down; but Martha shrank into the farthest corner of the room, much to the surprise of her hostess. Again she inspected Martha minutely and with imperturbable face unbound the baby and placed it on the floor. Martha hastened to explain that she was travelling over the mountain to the next village and fearing to travel after dark was seeking shelter. The woman again grunted for reply. She was evidently satisfied with her own investigations; and to Martha's surprise and relief asked no questions.

Presently a babel of voices and the barking of dogs announced the

arrival of more guests. Martha's face whitened with fear. At the sound of new arrivals, Martha's hostess hastened from the room, and after a long absence she returned and sat down on the floor in front of Martha and gazed steadily into her face. The latter trembled with agitation.

"I know you were running away, I always know that," she said as if such things were of daily occurence. "But who are you and who are these men that follow you?" and she looked from Martha to the baby. Without waiting for an answer she added, "There are three men after you." Then she paused to mark the effects of her words. Martha's face whitened. "Never fear," her hostess added, "I told them that there is no woman guest here to-night. They will not come here in search for you."

"Why," said Martha. "You lied to them."

"Of course," said the woman. "I always lie to them when they come here in search of a woman. Don't I know them? What do you want? Do you want them?" She asked sharply and looked Martha steadily in the face.

"No, no!" cried Martha in great distress. "I am going to my husband. Don't let them find me, I pray you don't"

There was a sound of heavy footsteps in the yard, and the inn-keeper's wife placed her eyes to the bit of glass fastened to the center of the paper covered door, and motioned to Martha to keep quiet. "He is coming," she presently exclaimed with some show of excitement. "I can see him in the light of the torches. He is huge, a real giant." Martha knew by the description that the one named was Bali, the Robber, and she wrung her hands in an agony of despair.

Covering a section of the wall on the opposite side of the room from the door was a curtain reaching from the ceiling nearly to the floor, behind which was a frame work resembling a child's high-chair. In the seat was a small wooden tablet in which was inscribed the name of an ancestor of the inn-keeper. It was an ancestral tablet, sacred to that particular clan. The woman lifted the lower corner of the curtain and motioned Martha to step behind it. Fear put springs lo Martha's feet, and in an instant she was behind the curtain.. It bulged outward showing her form in an alarming manner, and her feet could be plainly seen beneath the lower edge of the curtain. Her hostess seized a handful of old clothing, such as often adorns the floor of an inn, and flung it over Martha's feet. Then she took her stand in front of the curtain. At that instant the door was flung violently open and a man's head and powerful pair of shoulders thrust within. Martha peered through a rent in the curtain over the shoulder of her protectress and recognized the face of Bali. He threw a comprehensive glance about the room till his eyes rested upon Martha's

sleeping baby.

"Grandchild?" asked Bali.

"Grandchild?" shouted the woman. "Grandchild, indeed! What business have you putting your head into women's quarters. Robber!" she called, and lifted her voice in a long stream of invectives, punctured with a frequent cry of "robbers!" Bali closed the door softly and waited still her storm of reviling had ceased, then said in genuine humility,

"Pardon me, Madam. I was not looking for you or for yours, but for another, for whom to search I have the best rights given to a man. I would restore a lost woman to her husband. The necessity of my search is so great that I dared to impose upon your privacy.

Martha listened with bated breath, interpreted his words by her fear of him, and trembled violently at the sound of opening doors as the giant made his round of all the buildings in that vicinity. A little later she heard voices in the yard and heard Bali announce that he would search every house and every room in the town. Soon an uproar from the dogs of the town announced that he was as good as his word. He had been gone a long time and the town had settled down to a quiet before she ventured from her hiding place. Her hostess then fastened the door on the inside and proceeded to prepare Martha's supper.

"It is well that my husband is away to a distant market," said the woman. "Had he been here you would have left under the care of the giant. To exploit helpless women is the man's habit, and my husband is a man."

Later, in the evening Martha was dismayed to hear the rain pattering on the wooden platform in front of the door. It would make the road soft, and make it easy to follow her footsteps. She finally lay down by the side of her baby, but the presence of danger drove sleep from her eyes and she re solved to leave the inn the moment the moon should show light enough for the journey. She listened with bated breath to the sounds about the inn. The stamp of horses, the murmur of voices, the rustle of a brood of chickens that crowded and jostled each other just outside the door filled her with apprehension. She stared upward, with shivering fear, into the darkness while the hours dragged their leaden steps. So deep was the impression made by these hours of terror that for many years a voice or the rustling of the wind during the night hours, chilled her with the sense of fear. At last she was aroused by the early cock crow, and the moon, as if summoned by the same call, brightened the face of the paper-covered door. Martha arose and gently pushed the door open. The storm was over and the town was bathed in the soft moonlight. Overhead clouds scudded across the sky and occasionally covered the moon and dipped the town in shadows. Martha looked long at the peaceful scene and her sick

heart longed for the tender ties, once hers, and for the protection of home. She finally turned to her sleeping child and hushing it into a deeper slumber fastened it to her back. She then awakened the keeper of the inn and paid for her lodgings. That good woman grunted with approval when Martha explained her purpose. Martha stepped softly into the yard and closed the door.

"They will have searched the town," she confided in a whisper to her sleeping babe. "They will not awake till I have had three hours the start of them. When we get over the mountain all will be well, will it not, baby?" She brought the child's face around to her side and looked at it questioningly as though she expected a confirmation of her judgment, and hoped for some inspiration for the coming struggle. How tired she was, but she only half realized it, as fear put speed to her feet. On reaching the outskirts of the town she breathed freely. The cool night breeze on her cheek and the stimulant of action gave her a sense of freedom and security. But she little realized the vigilance of the sleepless Bali.

As Martha passed the last house of the village, a dog set up a howl, a long woolfish cry, primordal in its thrill of expectancy. It told of game in full view and called the pack to bury its nose in blood. In an instant the denizens of the kennels responded in one prolonged howl, and the town was in an uproar.

Bali was instantly in the street looking up and down for the cause of the outcry. He had heard and understood the first long cry and stood in the road, his ears strained to catch and locate that particular note. He ran from one end of the village to the other with the only result of increasing the general hubbub. He carefully examined the road for footprints but it had been so thoroughly trampled after the evening rain that he gained no information from it. At last feeling confident of the final results if it were simply a question of a race over the mountain, he returned to the inn to wait for the break of day. After the manner of such men, he was soon lost in profound slumber, but at the first ray of the coming dawn he was again in the street searching it from end to end. Soon he returned to the inn on the run and shook up his companions, who, to the astonishment of other guests, hastily left the inn.

"I never mistake a footprint," said Bali when they had reached the end of the village; "I have seen that one before," he added, pointing out the print of a small foot in the soft earth. Mr. Cho broke into a run. "Not so fast," said Bali with a laugh. "How long do you suppose you would last at that rate of speed up this mountain? We need you when our journey is over. Do you think, man, that with the baby on her back she can out-speed us?"

"I fear she suffers much," said Mr. Kim, "The road is hard but the terror of knowing she is followed is infinitely more terrible."

Mr. Cho again started to run, but was restrained by Bali's heavy hand on his shoulder. The touch was kindly and was remembered tenderly for many years afterward. The huge hand slipped down Mr. Cho's sleeve and closed on his hand and remained there. Thus was he able to keep pace with Bali's tireless speed. Mr. Kim strode in the rear his face filled with concern. Silently, the three men breasted the long mountain slope.

For three hours, Martha climbed the mountain with the moon's kindly rays upon her path. The long journey taught her to husband her strength, but when the. light sprang up in the east, she knew that her persuers would be on her tracks and the knowledge put speed into her feet. She hastened with the sleeping child till she gasped for breath. Finally her feet began to falter and growing dizzy she was compelled to sit down to recover her breath. Thus she lost much precious time. As the path approached the summit of the pass it was lined with high bushes and zig-zagged in its course so frequently that it completely hid the road at a distance of fifty yards below. While it did not permit her to see far enough to discover whether she was persued, she was glad for the protection and seclusion that it gave her. She often whispered to the sleeping babe, "We are safe now, we are safe." Yet the wind among the bushes below her would send her ahead with a fresh spirit of panic. Her knees trembled greatly and she prayed for strength and staggered on. For an hour she momentarily expected to reach the summit of the divide, but round each bend there was always another elevation stretching far above her. As the morning lengthened the stimulus from fear lessened, and the exhaustion from excessive physical effort, and from the lack of food settled upon her. There was a pain just above her eyes and the road seemed a blur. The child awoke and cried for attention, but Martha did not know it She felt sure the mountain was tricking her, for each elevation she climbed seemed to be the one over which she had just toiled. She hummed a song and was startled at her own voice, and stopping called out, "What is that?" She thought it would be easier to walk down rather than up and began to wonder why she was climbing up, always up. At last the path became easier and Martha sat down. She did not know it, but she had reached the top of the divide.

Just beyond were the rocks leading down over Maiden Falls. A hundred yards beyond that the road dropped away leading down the other side of the mountain. Above her towered the twin spurs of the mountain range. They leaned toward each other in sociable contemplation of the world at their feet. A short distance from where Martha sat was the great

black rock leading downward to the precipice that forms a portion of the falls. The smooth surface dipped downward so quickly that a pebble dropped on its surface would dance merrily away with accelerated motion for a distance of thirty feet, then, suddenly leaping into the air, plunge down an almost perpendicular cliff to a frightful depth. Martha's path lead directly across this black slippery rock upon an artificial embankment, which had been built of stone, sod, roots of trees, and trailing vines. This mass was held, though insecurely, by shallow nitches cut in the rock. It so happened at this particular time that a part of the path at the center had slipped away during a recent rain, leaving a few feet of space uncovered. A tiny stream spread out over this exposed surface of the rock and disappeared in its darker crevices beyond.

How long Martha sat with her head pillowed against a rock, while the baby played at her side, she did not know for slumber had closed her eyes. Suddenly she awoke and sprang to her feet with the sense of peril near at hand. Her brain was clear once more. She looked down the path from which she had come. A cool breeze fanned her cheeks, and the morning sun shone over a scene of infinite grandeur, and solitude reigned supreme. Suddenly, there was a sound of footsteps just beyond the last zigzag course of the road up which she had come. Martha swung the child to her back and stood with nostrils distended, like a wild deer surprised in her tracks. She gazed at the bend in the path, fascinated with fear, and trembling in every muscle. She could hear the heavy breathing of her pursuers. There was a stir in the bushes around the projection of a rock in the path. Then Bali's face appeared. She whirled and ran. Voices called her, called her by name, but they only put wings to her feet. She sped ac ross the little plateau leading to the head of Maiden Falls and on down the precipitous path, out on the artificial embankment and then paused on the edge of the open space where the earth had been swept away. Beneath her was the dark shelving rock stretching down to the brink of the falls. She caught the view at a glance and a wild thought flashed through her soul. Then the name of her babe was on her lips and she retreated a few steps to get momentum for the leap. There were voices close at hand calling her to stop, but with a startled cry she made the leap. Her foot touched a loose stone on the opposite side and she swung her arms in the air to regain her balance and for a moment stood poised over the chasm, her long hair streaming back ward over the face of the babe as if hiding its innocent eyes from the impending fate. The rock beneath her foot gave way and with a cry she turned half around and fell prone on her face on the rock below and slipped away from the path down the steep incline toward the brink of Maiden Falls with the baby on her back. Its tiny mouth puckered

into a doubtful smile. Martha clung to the surface of the rock, crowding her fingers into its smooth surface till the skin peeled from their lips, but her effort seemed only to hasten her downward course.

As Martha sprang for the opposite bank she felt the presence of her pursuers. So close, indeed, were they that when she fell, Bali sprang across the opening. He was an instant too late. The three men were spellbound with horror at the sight of Martha and her babe slipping irresistibly to the brink. Mr. Cho's face was ashen. He threw himself across the path and frantically reached after her. He gazed with anguish-filled eyes and his lips moved but they were dumb. Bali stood half bent, leaping toward the precipice in the position he had landed when he leaned across the opening. Mr. Kim, with hand on his knees, leaned over the prostrate form of Mr. Cho, his face drawn and old. No one spoke. The quiet gurgling of the tiny stream and a moan from Martha's lips were the only sound. Just at the edge of the precipice was a line of green where the little stream seemed to enter the rock. From this seam a few grasses and tiny shrubs protruded. From that line it was no more than a hand's breadth to the brink of the falls. Martha's foot touched the line of green, and for a moment it held her. Her body swayed and a bunch of moss and grass slipped over the ledge, then Martha lay quiet with one foot touching the green ridge and the other resting on the rock in the open space made by the falling moss. All was silent save the sharp in-take of breath by the three men, then from far-away came back a faint echo of the fallen debris. Suddenly Mr. Kim came to life.

"Cling to the rock," he called, "It is I, your Pastor calling. Be not afraid, we will save you. Don't move your feet! Don't look up! Don't move a muscle!"

Bali had already bounded away, and when Mr. Kim whirled about to secure some means of aid, he saw Bali up the side of the mountain pulling furiously at a long vine which trailed over the rocks a hundred feet away. In a moment he was back at Mr. Kim's side and the two men silently and swiftly twisted two vines together. Mr. Kim wound one end of the vine around the projection of a rook and held it there, while Bali threw the other end toward Martha. It landed within a few inches of her hand, then from the wilful contortions of a vine rolled away with many a wriggle and mocking twist. Without a moment's hesitation Bali seized it, and holding it in his hand, backed down towards the brink of the. precipice where Martha lay. Presently he reached her and seizing her arm bade her not to fear. He raised her up gently. For a moment he looked over the cliff into the frightful depth, then he glanced along the thin thread that must now support a double weight. For an instant his eyes sought the

grave face of Mr. Kim, and he knew the latter sensed the new peril. Then in a voice almost sweet in its gentle solicitude, he directed Martha how to act. She began creeping upward on her knees by pulling on the vine and working forward hand over hand. Bali letting as little weight on the vine as possible, kept pace with her, speaking words of assurance and kindly encouragement. "Sorry for the mishap," he said in a tone that suggested how secure she now was. "You will not look up yet, but, waiting on the bank above us is one for whom you have traveled so far and suffered so much. He loves your God and he loves you." There was a tranquil musical quality in his voice that gave her a sense of peace, and her recent wild flight and terrible mishap seemed far away. At last they were within ten feet of the top of the incline. Mr. Cho was joyous. He laughed and cried and called endearing words of encouragements.

"She is coming back, my bonny wife and the baby too," be shouted. "There you are, almost up! Defied death! Ha, ha! I died a hundred times while you slid down the cursed rock. Ha-a-a-a! It was a thousand years from here to the brink! Hasten Martha, I, your husband am calling!"

At the sound of his voice, Martha paused and looked up. Her face had been torn by the rough rock and the front of her jacket was deeply soiled and touched with red from her wounds. Clinging for a moment to Bali's huge hand she looked into the eyes of her husband, and her lips parted. Bali spoke to her almost, playfully, but with a note of warning in his voice. "This is a slender thread," he said. "Be sure it fails not to unite you two. Did it break it· would make a long separation." She again obediently seized the vine and started upward.

Mr. Cho, in his eagerness caught the vine at the point held by Mr. Kun and before the latter could prevent the act gave it a sudden sharp tug. Martha slipped and lay still on the rock with a sickening sense of coming disaster.

"Wait! Wait!" Cried Mr. Kim. "One vine has parted, the other is twisting and the bark is being wrung off. You there." He shouted to Mr. Cho, "Run for another vine!" He grasped the vine more firmly and reached toward Martha as far as be could extend his arm. Martha raised her face from the rock and for a moment looked into the eyes of her Pastor with an appeal in their depth he long remembered. Bali looked over the prostrate form of Martha into the eyes of Mr. Kim, his own face as white as Martha's jacket, while on it was stamped a great purpose. "How is it now, is the bark still twisting?" He asked as .quietly as though he had casually asked the time of day.

"It is giving," Mr. Kim gasped with a hasty glance down the ten

feet of intervening space.

"You are safe, Martha," said Bali in a tone of deep assurance using her name for the first time. "Forgive your husband. Remember he has also suffered greatly."

Bali loosed his hold on the vine and spread his huge body out on the surface of Black Rock. Down he went with increasing velocity till his foot touched the green line of the precipice where Martha had lain. There he paused. In a moment Mr. Kim had drawn Martha up to the path. Reaching for her, he look Martha and the babe in his arm, and turning placed them on the ground. With a shout to Mr. Cho to hasten he again turned to call encouragement to Bali. At that moment a bit of rock and soil slipped from beneath Bali's feet. The resistance offered by the moss and shrubs gave way, and slowly Bali moved downward. Then his feet hung over the brink. He struggled frantically, digging his hands and nails into the rock and crowding his chin down onto the surface of the smooth granite. He moved more rapidly and quickly slipped over the brink. He was gone! No! his hands caught a projection of the rock and held him. For a moment he dangled over the precipice and his hands alone could be seen. With superhuman effort his grip tightened upon the slippery rock and he brought his face above the brink and looked up into the face of Mr. Kim over a space of thirty feet. Then the rock made soft by falling water began to give under his hand. He smiled at his companions taking them all in at one glance. Then his head slowly sank below the rock. As they watched, the muscles of his huge hands bulged again and for an instant his dark hair appeared above the brink of Maiden Falls. There was a shock of crumbling stone and his hands disappeared. There was a long pause. Would they never know—they held their breath and agony gripped the heart. A dull thud came back to them from so far away. Then the mountain was quiet. The tiny stream gurgled softly over the slippery surface of Black Rock—that was all.

Mr. Kim stood for a long time gazing down over Maiden Falls. When he at last turned, Martha's head rested on a mound of earth by the side of the path and her face was white and still. Her husband was chafing her hands and calling to her in wild foolish terms. The babe, loosed from her mother's back sat at her side laughing as she pulled handfuls of dry grass and flung it from her.

"She has forgotten her trouble for a time and it is well," said Mr. Kim. He left them and hastened down to the foot of Maiden Falls. He never spoke of what he saw there. His townsmen came to his assistance, and the horror of the scene was printed on their minds. Stains lay on the black rock till the rain of mid-summer again sent its flood over Maiden

Falls. No one in all that country side would approach Maiden Falls for many months, and the story is often told that now when the wind blows hard from the south the ex-robber can be seen riding with the ancient crew, and that his wild voice can be heard above them all, shouting in the storm.

The Christian community talk fondly of his memory and when Martha heard of the stained rocks she murmured "It is the stain of blood sacrifice."

## CHAPTER XXVII. THE HERMIT OF THE SALT MARSH SPEAKS

Mr. Cho and Martha abode long at the home of Mr. Kim in Rocky Ridge to regain strength and rest from the shock and toil of their recent experience, and to readjust their relations to the new world of moral forces. They were on God's ground; suffering had assured them of His high commission, but the real battle was all before them.

When they left for their home in the south another figure had joined the group. Madam Kim rode on a donkey at the rear of the two chairs, while Pastor Kim strode at her side. Madam Kim's face and voice were just as sharp as when she first "gave in," and she regarded with the same pride the stalwart preacher at her side. They had been separated only three years yet his hair was streaked with gray. There was something about him she did not understand; and the mystery sharpened her voice. He had left her an inexperienced man, enthusiastic, blundering. He had returned to her a master of men; a warrior challenging the word of age-intrenched wrong; carrying the hurt of the world on his soul. She had seen the scars of cruel beatings, and he had told her of the many scenes of sufferings and victory. Never, again, she promised herself, would they be separated. If there were to be sufferings and cruelty, she would share them all and glory in them. Some day she would be laid in the same grave, that would be for a long rest. Now she would live his life, share his burdens, and no power should hinder.

The people of Standing Stone heard of the approach of the wanderers and hundreds traveled ten li from the town to welcome the return. No magistrate was ever received more royally than was Pastor Kim, his wife, Mr. Cho and Martha. The Devil of the Salt Marsh headed the Christain portion of the procession. Grandmother Pagoda was next in line, and Changdingi was at her side; the last named joined the number as it was the most interesting event he had known. The Christian development was altogether contrary to reason, bewildering, and insufferably

disconcerting. He had long ago resolved never to strike at it again, now he wanted to see it in motion. There followed a great company who had passed through much tribulation.

An hour before the arrival of the wanderers the procession lined up on both sides of the road. The Christians sang hymns and their fellow townsmen, feeling isolated, joined in the effort to make melody.

Mr. Kim led the little company as they entered the line., and was greeted with a burst of song. The Hermit was master of ceremonies. The people paid him such deference and he assumed the responsibility as his natural right. He took his position on a slight elevation which commanded a view of the two lines of people and also of the wanderers. Turning his face to Mr. Kim he addressed the people. No one was ever inattentive when the Hermit spoke. In his ugly face was an insistency, almost a menace. He began with a deep rumble in his deep chest that prepared his listeners for a coming shock, but there was no jolting, his voice was rugged and harsh, yet his words were gentle.

"Welcome home," said he, then paused and turned his unsmiling eyes down the long lines of waiting people, and continued, "we are welcoming home this day, the most remarkable man who has appeared in our generation. Since becoming a Christian I have often left my salt-pans for weeks together and traveled to the Capital, and to other large cities, and when I could induce men to confide in my ugly face I have gleaned ideas and facts relating to the change of opinions and practises of our times, and in the light of this information I have tried to measure the new force that has come among us in the person of Mr. Kim, our Pastor. I again repeat he is the most remarkable man of this generation. He will decline this statement as a personal compliment which is proper for him to do but the Devil of the Salt Marsh never soiled his lips by flattering. He will tell you that whatever good has come to this community through his service is from above. That is all true, but he is the only man God could trust with the task of telling His Truth to the men of these mountains and plains. Like Paul he has sung praises in a noisome prison. He received more stripes than did Paul. As did Paul so did he overcome the subtle attacks of false brethren. Like the Christ he loved men into the Kingdom. He went out into the Salt Marsh and found the despised, the hated, the abhorred; the one by whose name parents frightened children into obedience; the one whose face and form was more ugly to look upon than the wayside demons; the one whose heart, overloaded with hate, waited upon the leaden footed hours for the opportunity to satiate revenge, even the Devil of the Salt Marsh, I say, he loved the Devil into the Kingdom.

"There stands before you another man who will speak for himself.

He on an occasion you well remember, told you how he wound his venomous coil about the Preacher and struck at him to kill. Today there is no serpent in his heart, he stands before you noble, true. He is here to make right the wrongs of the past. By his side is Martha, a princess among women. Listen to me. This man has been your terror for many years, so offensive was he at one time had he crossed my path I would have snuffed out his life as I would that of a reptile. Today he is chief among virtuous citizens, and the latter days of many of you will be blessed because of him. Who was the author of all this? Who?" The hermit paused and slowly raising his long arm levelled his massive hand at Pastor Kim.

The Hermit's arm slowly fell to his side and his eyes searched the faces of the two lines of waiting people. He waited so long the throng craned their necks and jostled each other to see his face, then the silence became tense.

"Early this morning," he said, his voice rising with a peculiar quality of emotion that awed his listeners, "armed soldiers marched into our town with orders to arrest a certain man whom you all know, with the purpose of haling him to justice for many self-confessed misdeeds, for swift retribution. You arc all familiar with tales of his activities to make restitution, and how he surrendered his person to make farther atonement with his life by meeting the demands of the law.

"Underneath a great waterfall in the north where the stream disappears in the dry season, the rocks are dyed red and out on the mountain side is a lone grave, and at its head is a smooth oaken slab on which is written:

BALI.

'He gave his life for the helpless.'

"The Governor and other bloodthirsty men will be disappointed when they learn that the fearless Robber Chief, the incomparable master of men is no more. For the sake of helpless women, in the name of his new Master, he tossed aside his life with a smile on his brave lips."

Again the Hermit paused, then lifting his mighty voice he called long with a world of pathos and triumph it its tones till the mountain echoed again:

"Oh, the power of the living Christ!"

THE END.