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Rufus Hill



Frontispiece.

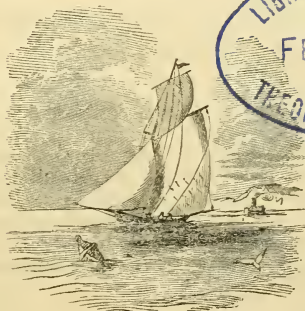


Mongol gentleman.

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RUFUS HILL:

The Missionary Child in Siam.

A MEMOIR WRITTEN BY HIS MOTHER,
NOW IN AMERICA.



Philadelphia:


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RUFUS HILL:

The Missionary Child in Siam.

THE little boy, whose history is here given, was born and lived far away from the happy homes of those who will read it. I have two reasons for giving you this story. One is, that you may see how the Holy Spirit of God can plant the love of Jesus in the heart of a little child, possessing no uncommon faculties—a child in no way different in body or mind from yourself, or your playmates.

Another reason is, that you may learn something of the suffering to which the children of missionaries are exposed in the hot, unhealthy climate of southern and southeastern Asia.

Rufus Hill (for that was the little

boy's name) was born at Singapore, February 1, 1834. This town is often mentioned by travellers and missionaries, and is found on an island of the same name, situated near the southern extremity of the peninsula of Malacca, and separated from it only by a narrow strait. In length the island is about twenty-five miles, and fifteen in breadth, and it lies at the southern point of the continent of Asia. You can easily find it on your map.

The coast is very level: but the land rises gradually toward the interior, until it terminates in a lofty peak near the centre of the island.

Only the southern side of the island is cultivated. The rest is still covered with a dense jungle, inhabited by tigers and jackals. The former sometimes creep into the settlement, and carry away the natives.

The soil is not very fertile, but sufficiently so to produce nutmegs, cloves, sugar-cane, and many other fruits and plants peculiar to tropical regions, though



Chinese labourer. p. 8.

none of them in the greatest perfection, except a fruit called papaw, and pine-apples.

The island is a part of the East India possessions of the English government, by whom its laws are made and its officers appointed. All honourable and lucrative situations are filled by Englishmen, of whom there are several hundred in the town. But most of the inhabitants are natives of eastern and southern Asia, though you see people there from almost every tribe and city east of Constantinople. In walking the streets you might be reminded of the company assembled at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, as described in the book of Acts ii. 9, 10, 11. It is well worthy the name of "modern Babel," which is often given to it. I should like to tell you much about these people, but I can say little in so small a book.

The first thing my readers would notice, in passing through the streets of Singapore, would be the singularity and

diversity of dress. In that part of the world native fashions never change, and one nation or caste never adopts the custom of another; and so closely does each adhere to his own, that a stranger soon learns to distinguish not only the natives of one district from those of another by their dress, but their caste or rank, and, in many cases, even their trade or business.

Of the Asiatic population the Chinese are the most important, both because they are most numerous, and the most industrious. No work is so menial, difficult, or delicate but they will undertake it, and strive hard to do it—well enough at least to get their pay.

When you meet a man, with high cheek bones, eyes diagonally set, receding forehead, and a hank of long, coarse, black hair, hanging in a braid from the crown of his head, you may know he is a Chinaman. If he is a gentleman, or a scholar, he is dressed in broad, loose, trousers, gathered and tied about the



A Chinese gentleman. p. 9.

hips; a sack, buttoned closely around the neck, with large, open sleeves; shoes or sandals, with inch thick soles; an umbrella over his head, and a fan in his hand. This is the invariable costume of the wealthiest and more respectable class of Chinese emigrants. The labourer wears little or nothing beside a pair of short trousers, reaching no lower than the knee. Blue and black are their favourite colours for ordinary dress, and white for mourning.

They are very much attached to their own customs; and it is often said in India, "a Chinaman would as soon lose his head as his hair." However this may be, police officers find their braids a great convenience; for, in catching rogues, or taking them to prison, it is only necessary to get a firm grasp on their long hair, and they are perfectly secure.

In strong contrast to the every-day practical appearance of the plodding, money-loving and money-making Chinaman, trips along a dandyish-looking fel-

and as their religion (which is Moham-
medan,) prescribes no particular fashion
of dress, that undeviating uniformity
of costume is not found among them
which prevails among other tribes repre-
sented at Singapore. Still the high-
cheek bone, the dark scowling counte-
nance, and the piratical appearance of
the whole man, soon teaches one to dis-
tinguish a Malay, notwithstanding his
dress.

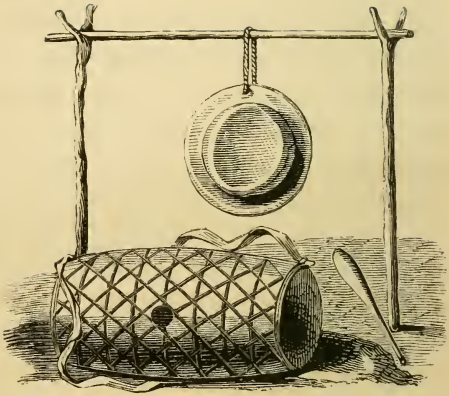
But I cannot give a particular account
of all these people. There we find Bur-
mese, Bugis from the Celebes, Cochin
Chinese, and indeed natives of every con-
siderable island near the coast of south-
ern and eastern Asia. I said they
brought their own language and fashions
with them; they bring their false religion
also.

Were it not for the spiritual degrada-
tion of this class of the population, Sin-
gapore would be a delightful place. The
English residents have elegant houses,
good roads, nice carriages, and a beauti-

ful church. But the soul-sickening ceremonies of idolatry, which are daily exhibited there, cast a shade over all human improvements and all nature's beauties.

Here the poor benighted sons of India may be seen at their hook-swinging, walking barefoot over burning coals, jumping from elevated platforms upon sacks of straw containing daggers, spikes, and other pointed instruments; and to these are added other idolatrous ceremonies still more revolting to man, and abominable in the sight of God.

They also have their seasons for carrying abroad their idols. This seems the grand gala day. The idol, being seated upon a gilded throne, under a splendid canopy, is borne aloft upon men's shoulders through the streets, followed by thousands of people; some bearing gay banners, splendid umbrellas, bouquets of beautiful flowers; some, pagodas, elephants, tigers, and the forms of many imaginary creatures, resembling neither beast, bird, nor



Siamese musical instruments—the gong and the drum. p. 13.

insect; all made of coloured and gilt paper; while in the hands of others are musical instruments, which seem constructed for the purpose of obtaining from them the most discordant sounds. To the deafening discord of these, add the shouts and yells of the multitude, and the idea of a heathen festival will be fully realized.

During the months of January and February, the Mohammedans hold their forty days' fast. From the rising to the setting sun they eat nothing; but at night they take their fill. It is devoted wholly to feasting and riot. Many of these deluded creatures go on a pilgrimage to Mecca on the Red Sea, where Mohammed was born, and are thus made too holy to work! Accordingly, after their return, they are supported by alms given from door to door; thus setting at naught that precept of our holy religion which says, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat."

In or near the month of April the Chinese may be seen flocking in multitudes to the beautiful hill-sides, carrying great quantities and varieties of food. You ask, "Are they going to have a pic-nic?" But, see; what are those small openings on the hill-side, closed with white tablets? They look like the mouths of old-fashioned brick ovens." They are graves, and you see the Chinamen are rapidly assembling around them.

"What!—A pic-nic in the burying-ground!" you exclaim in astonishment.

No, not exactly that. This is their "Feast of Tombs," when each family feeds the spirits of their departed ancestors and friends. They place the food before the mouth of the grave, and let it remain several hours, during which time they say the spirits feast on the essence; and when they eat the material part, which they say the spirits could not consume, they insist that it has lost nearly all its nutritious properties. It is a part, and

a great part, of a Chinaman's religion, to worship, in one way or another, his dead friends!

O, how vain and wearisome are all the forms and ceremonies of every false religion. In what strong contrast do they appear to that simple heavenly requirement, which says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

The little sketch I have given will show the reader how degraded any people are who have no Bible, and no knowledge of the true God. Probably many of these men and women, and some even of the children, would become Christians if they were told how Christ died for sinners, and for them as well as others. But who will go and teach them this glorious truth? Where shall the men and women be found, who will willingly, yes, gladly sacrifice home, friends, and country, that they may have the unspeakable privilege of teaching these poor, dark-minded heathens, the true and only way of salvation?

But the home of our little Rufus was to be in the midst of still grosser moral darkness. Here, in Singapore, one might turn the eye to the tasteful edifice where the English residents worshipped God; but there no church spire pointed the devout soul heavenward. No preacher of the blessed gospel had ever passed through the great thorough-fares, lanes, and by-paths of that city of five hundred thousand immortal beings, and proclaimed a dying Saviour's love. A very few, through books or reports, had heard of the "foreigners' religion," but nothing more.

To reach this country from Singapore, you go about one thousand miles north, up the Gulf of Siam; then twenty miles up the river Meinam, (Mother of Waters,) which empties into the gulf, and you reach the city of Bangkok. To this place the parents of little Rufus were destined; and, soon after his birth, took passage on a fine large ship belonging to a parsee, or merchant, of Bombay, Sir James Settjee Jeejeebhoy.



Siamese wanderer. p. 18.

On this ship were nearly one hundred men, not one of whom could speak English. The captain was an Arab, and his crew Lascars, or East Indian sailors. At the end of two weeks the ship, passing from Singapore along the eastern coast of Malacca, anchored outside the sand-bar, which stretches across the head of the gulf, opposite the mouth of the beautiful river Meinam. Here they took a pilot; and, after passing over the bar at high tide, into the mouth of the river, three days of floating and warping up its serpentine course brought them to Bangkok, that great city, which was to be their future home.

How the natives flocked around to see the foreign (or "outside") women, and white-haired children. And the missionaries—they, in their turn, looked, and wondered too.

But how shall we distinguish between men and women, in this crowd of dark-brown faces and strange costume, for they all wear a long, broad piece of cloth

wrapped around the waist, and fastened before them, the hanging ends turned back, and tucked in behind, so as to appear like what your grand-parents called "small clothes." Oh! I see the difference now. The women wear a scarf, thrown *forward* over the left shoulder, then brought under the right arm, and thrown *back* over the same shoulder again; but the men wear nothing above their hips.

And their hair! After training it with the help of stiff black oil to stand erect, the men shave theirs all off, except a circle of two inches in diameter on the top, which they crop to an inch in length, just as the gardener does his grass-plats and borders. While the women, a little more fanciful, slope their tuft of hair from the centre towards the edges; then pulling out a row of hairs, so as to leave a thread-like ring around it, they begin on the outer side, cut close to the head, gradually increasing the length to a half-inch, then sloping away on the other side, so as to give the top of the head the ap-



Siamese woman and child. p. 19.

pearance of a Liliputian mound encircled by a narrow walk, and the whole enclosed by a rolling, grass border. The rest of the hair is cut very short, but not shaved.

During the passage to Siam little Rufus began to be sick; still his parents hoped he would be well again when they landed. But, in Bangkok, proper food for a sickly child of his age could not be obtained. Neither bread, crackers, nor flour could be found there; and the little milk which could be procured was spoiled, after three or four hours, from the excessive heat.

All this time, you may be assured, his parents felt a deep and constant anxiety for him; such anxiety as only those parents know who see their children growing up under the weakening influences of an unhealthy climate, and, more than all, in the midst of the abominations of heathenism. As soon as he should be old enough to understand, he would be exposed to hearing the filthy conversa-

tion of those by whom he was surrounded; he might see them steal; hear them tell lies, and witness many of those vile actions which the Bible says and which we know the heathen practise.

When they thought of all this, they felt that nothing but the grace of God could keep their dear boy from following in the wicked ways of those about him; for in this country, even when children associate with good people, and have good boys and girls for playmates, they sometimes tell lies, and steal, and do many other wicked things.

And what did these anxious parents do? Just what I hope every Christian parent does,—by earnest prayer and constant watchfulness they sought to train him up in the fear of the Lord; striving to seek for him “*first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” being assured that all other things should be added. And did Jesus keep him from the evil example of those around him? you ask. We shall see by and by.

When he had been in Siam six or eight months he had become so feeble he could not sit alone; and at the same time both his parents were so ill that he was given up entirely to the care of a native woman, only that he was sometimes brought and laid on the bed beside his mother, which he thought a great privilege.

After his parents were able to go out, they would rise early, before it was quite light, and give him a ride in a little boat on the river, hoping the early morning air might benefit him. But why not go in a carriage? Because in the city of Bangkok, though nearly as large as New York, there are no roads except such as we call foot-paths; the whole width between the houses on opposite sides of the street being not more than twelve or fourteen feet, and the rolling pavement so narrow that it is with the utmost difficulty two can walk side by side. However, this does not incommode the Siamese, for they always walk single file, the superior

going first, and the others following in the order of their rank.

But the people walk very little. The river, which runs through the business part of the city, is their great thoroughfare, and the canals which intersect, not the city only, but the whole country, answer the purpose of roads. These canals are not like ours; they are simply broad ditches without locks, for the country is so level there is no need of locks. Small row boats are used on these canals, not large ones like those in this country.

The rides of little Rufus could not be more than an hour long; for by that time the sun was so hot it was not safe to be out. Would you like to live in a country where the heat of the sun is so powerful you could not play out of doors except in the morning before the sun is an hour high, or just before it sets at evening, and almost without twilight? Such a country is Siam, and such, indeed, is most of India, where so many missionaries and their children live.

When you hear of missionaries leaving our pleasant Christian country, and going far away, probably never to return, do you ever think how much their children suffer—oftentimes far more than their parents—from the unhealthiness of the climate, and the privations incident to life in an uncivilized state of society? Whether you ever thought of it or not, so it is. In such countries children never have red cheeks and full, healthy-looking faces, as those do who live in a cool climate; and very frequently it is found necessary to send them far, far away from their dear parents, with little expectation of seeing them again.

When Rufus had a little brother he was greatly delighted, and looked upon him as a gift from God. Though he had received all his mother's care and attention before this, and was still so feeble that he could not sit alone, he was never willing to be served before his baby brother. After this precious treasure was

recalled by Him who gave it, Rufus always spoke of him with great affection, and used to call him "God's Charlie."

When Charlie was about a month old, his parents were advised to take him on board a ship, lying outside the bar, at the mouth of the river Meinam, and try the effect of sea-air for a few days.

You will remember that Bangkok, the capital of Siam, is nearly twenty miles from the mouth of the river, lying on both sides of the Meinam; and because the water is so shallow over the bar, large ships often discharge and take in their cargo outside of it, and do not come up to the city at all. Foreigners and invalids at Bangkok frequently spend a few days on board ships thus waiting for their load of shipping.

In accordance with this advice the parents prepared to go. They obtained a boat, and hired six men to row it. They took rice and fish for the men; a small box of medicines; a trunk of clothes, for the children and themselves; cooking-

utensils, and food enough to last ten days; for they were going to a Moham-
medan ship, and the Mussulmen will not
allow those who differ from them in
religion to eat of their food, use their
dishes, or cook by their fire.

About four in the afternoon they
started; but at this time the tide from
the sea came rushing up, so that at dark
they were not more than four miles from
home. Then the boatmen must eat rice;
so they drew up to the shore, near a
zayat, kindled a fire on the bank, took
the boiling pot from the boat, cooked,
and ate their supper. By this time it
began to rain, and the sky being moon-
less and cloudy, of course it was very
dark. But the boat had a cover, and
under it sat these parents, with their two
children; Rufus too feeble to sit alone,
and his little brother too young to bear
any exposure or neglect, and his mother
had not walked for two weeks until that
day. There they were, with no prospect
before them but of spending the night in

this uncomfortable manner; for, even if it were safe to proceed, they would not be able to see the ship, which would be lying eight or ten miles out at sea. If they stayed in their boat close to the shore it would be perfectly safe; but then how could they or their little ones endure the mosquitoes, which were like bees around a hive in a warm spring day, and to put up the mosquito curtains was quite impossible. In this boat—twenty feet long and four wide—were twelve persons, including the children, and, with the overloaded boat, the darkness was so intense that the steersman at the stern could not see those who were rowing at the bows.

Missionaries among the heathen suffer many and great inconveniences; for, though few may have thought of it, yet it is true that nearly all our comforts and luxuries come to us through the influence of the gospel on the habits of men.

It was also dangerous to be out in the excessive darkness, lest they should be run down by some larger boat, or the

wind might rise, as it often did at night, and the river become so rough, that in the dark, it would be impossible to keep the heavy laden boat from filling with water and sinking.

But all these things were provided against by a kind overruling Providence. While the men were eating their suppers, it was ascertained that an important medicine had been forgotten by the friend who packed their things. Now their way seemed plain; when their friends advised it, they thought it their duty to try this course, for the benefit of their sick child; yet when, without any fault or oversight of their own, the indispensable medicine had been forgotten, they thought it equally plain they should return.

The tide had now turned, and the current was running down with great velocity, which, with the darkness, made their homeward passage slower and much more dangerous than when they went down.

It proved that the mistake which caused their return was "all for the best,"—as, indeed, all things are ever known to be, by those who recognise the hand of the Lord in the falling of a sparrow; for that night proved so tempestuous that little else than a miracle could have saved their small, overloaded boat from destruction.

A few weeks after this some of the Siamese told the native who owned the mission premises that if he allowed the missionaries to remain there any longer, they would inform the king, and immediate imprisonment would follow. This was quite enough to frighten a Siamese, and he insisted that the missionaries should leave the place at once.

But where were they to go? Who, after this threat, would let them have a house? And if they could get one, it would not be as large or convenient as many an American farmer's pig-sty. But by the good providence of God, they and their sick, and almost dying chil-

dren were not turned out without shelter into the burning heat of a tropical sun. Before night came a place was provided, in which they could lay their weary heads.

The only English gentleman in Bangkok did what he could to assist in this time of need. May the Lord reward him! Mr. H. rented them a small board house, and sold them a smaller floating one, and another was hired of an Indo-Portuguese; so all the families found places, which would at least shelter them from the sun and rain.

During these scenes of trial Rufus continued very ill, and a little daughter of one of the other missionaries was lying at the point of death. When they left their home it was doubtful whether the child could live through a removal; but she was spared to linger through another period of twenty-four hours, and then entered that house with many mansions, which Christ has prepared for those that love him.

This little girl was one of the only two playmates Rufus ever had. The other was a little boy, whose mother, not long after this, was taken away by death, which obliged the desolate father to send him, together with his baby sister, to friends in this country; for children cannot remain among the heathen without a faithful mother to watch over both their health and habits.

Did you ever ask yourselves such questions as these?—

What should I now be, had no kind Christian parents or friends guided and instructed me? Had I no Bible, no Sunday-school, no Christian influence of any kind to lead me in the right way? Suppose you had never been taught that it is a wicked thing to swear, lie, steal, break the Sabbath, quarrel, and disobey your parents; what kind of children do you think you would have been? Would you be kind, gentle, lovely, and pure, practising those things which are of good report? What you would be without these

restraining influences, such the heathen children are, and with such vile companions no Christian parents can permit their children to associate; therefore, when mothers are taken away from their families, there is no alternative but to send them *home*, as the parents' native land is called.

A few months later another effort was made to give Rufus the benefit of sea-air, by spending a few days in a ship, lying at the mouth of the river, inside the "bar."

Now, as before, they were obliged to fit themselves out with provisions, cooking-utensils, and indeed every thing indispensable for a two weeks' stay in a Mohammedan ship.

They left home a little after midnight, for the double purpose of reaching the ship before the noon-day heat, and also before the sea-breeze came in, which often made the river so rough near the mouth as to endanger small boats.

That was a delightful morning. The

splendour of a clear, southern starlight glowed from the firmament above, and was reflected back from the deep, unruffled bosom of the beautiful Meinam beneath. All nature seemed wrapt in calm repose, as that little boat, with its precious freight, shot swiftly and silently along, obedient to the measured dip of the rower's oar.

By and by a faint gleam of light was seen in the east, and in a few moments after, the sun, with a suddenness peculiar to tropical regions, seemed to leap at once into the horizon, casting a soft, mellow light over the unbroken level of the surrounding landscape.

The light revealed to the eye of the voyagers many objects of interest. Quite in the water's edge grew the tall, trunkless Altap leaf; a little farther back was the slim, straight bamboo, crowned with its osier-like branches and tiny leaves; while here and there, of still greater height and sturdier growth, were clusters of forest trees, entwined and matted to-



The Archa Palm of Siam. p. 33.

gether by creeping cane and clinging ivy, until the enclosure seemed wholly impervious to man or beast. Then would open to view a straight, narrow canal, shooting off through the dense jungle as far as the eye could trace so narrow a channel, completely overarched with pendent branches and clustering vines.

Tall trees formed a natural lattice, which, from top to bottom, was covered with festoons of the beautiful morning-glory, making a complete wall of flowers many rods in length; while, ever and anon, some little opening in the shrubbery would disclose, far in the background, huts, gardens, and domestic animals, with all other appurtenances incident to Siamese country-life. And, still beyond all this, the tall cocoanut and betel reared their graceful heads, and spread abroad their long fringe-like leaves, whispering to the passer-by, "We dwell in the land where nature loads the earth with such an entangled and matted mass of trunks and stems, of twining wreaths

and vines, that man is almost excluded from the scene."

As these views faded away in quick succession before the delighted eye, the boat, with a favouring tide, was making rapid progress on its destined way, when, suddenly rounding a bend in the shore, they came in full view of the ship, lying about two miles below; at the same moment encountering so fierce a rush of wind and waves as seemed to render their destruction all but inevitable. They could not turn in to the shore, lest the boat should capsize in the trough of the sea; they could not retrace their way, for there was the same danger in turning the boat. To go forward was the only course. But, amid this wild confusion of wind and waves, could the helmsman steer so exactly as to come alongside the ship? Should they go a few feet too far to the left, the force of the current would dash them to pieces against her bows. Should they go the same distance too far to the right, a rope could not be thrown to them

from the ship, in which case they must be carried out to sea, where, in the present state of the wind and waves, certain destruction awaited them. But through the kindness of Him who holds in his hand the winds and the waves and calms the raging of the sea, they reached the ship in safety about eight o'clock in the morning.

A few days after, the anchor was raised and the sails spread, and the ship rode out into the Gulf of Siam, about twelve miles. Here the mother and children remained two weeks, and the sea-air proved very beneficial to little Rufus.

But now the vessel was to sail for her far-off home, in Bombay; so they got into her long boat—which of itself was almost a small ship—with twelve dark, savage-looking Lascars, to return to the mouth of the river, where the father was to meet them, and take them back to Bangkok. He could not go to the ship, for the river boats are too small to live in

the high sea-waves; so he waited for them at Paknam.

When they left the ship they expected to be in the river in two or three hours. They took nothing to eat with them, except a few crackers for Rufus. The boat flew along as if carried on the wings of the wind, and in a short time they found themselves almost within reach of the luxuriant shrubbery on the shore. But, where were they? Not at the mouth of the river, to be sure. No, far from it. These Bengalese—never very thoughtful or far-sighted—had not taken into the account, that at that hour of the morning the receding tide permitted the water of the river to run with a strong current far out into the gulf; and, though the wind might be strong enough to carry them northward toward the land in spite of the tide, yet the current, spreading out strong and wide from the mouth of the river, would carry them with a swift but imperceptible sideway motion to the westward. However, such proved to be

the fact; and when they reached the land not one could conjecture how far they might be from the mouth of the river! But the wind soon died away, and then, with all the stupid patience for which the natives of India are so remarkable, they betook themselves to their oars, and made sure but slow progress toward the mouth of the river.

By this time the sun had become exceedingly hot; but there was an umbrella in the boat, and Rufus and his baby-brother were huddled under it, as best they could be; but so intense was the heat, that, throughout the whole day, they seemed like plucked flowers in the scorching rays of a mid-day sun, ready to wither and die, and great was their mother's anxiety on their account, you may be assured.

At length, just as the sun was setting, they reached the mouth of the river. Here the Lascars run the boat on a sand-bank; but, after some delay, pulled off again, and passed just around the point

on the lee-shore, when they again ran aground, and made no more effort to get loose that night, though the ship, lying in the river, which they wished to reach, was not more than a mile away, and in plain sight.

Now, it was certain the whole company must sleep in the open boat that night. The Lascars cooked their rice and fish, which, after pouring it into a large dish, they placed on the bottom of the boat, and then gathering around, each helped himself, using his hand for knife, fork, and spoon. After they had supped, they offered their passengers some; and little Rufus, who was very hungry, gladly accepted the invitation to eat, but his mother did not think it prudent for him to partake of the meal, and so concluded to wait till morning.

Soon after they laid their miniature mast across the boat, from the stern to the bows for a ridge pole; then throwing a sail over it for a roof, asked "Mem" and the children to sleep under the awn-

ing, while they laid themselves down to their own slumbers in the open air. By this time it had become cool, and the children slept sweetly, while their mother watched beside them.

Just look for a moment at this singular scene! There lay the Lascars, with their black, fierce-looking faces, and half-covered bodies, fast asleep. Here lay two little helpless, pale-faced children, and there sat their lonely, wearied, care-worn mother, keeping her vigilant night-watch by their side; while the blowing of the porpoises, and the appearance of some uncouth inhabitant of the deep, on the one hand, and the dark, thick, wild jungle, within a stone's throw, on the other, rendered the gloom doubly gloomy. And what were that mother's thoughts during those hours of the night? Did she think of the dear cottage home, in America; of the kind, and ever-watchful parents there; of the loved brothers and sisters; of the light and joyousness which had ever surrounded her path;

of the home and friends she might have called her own, had she chosen to remain in her own native land? Yes, she thought of all these things, and thanked her God and Saviour that he had so honoured her, as to allow her to leave all these comforts for his sake.

At length morning appeared. Then the boatmen must cook, and eat rice before they could leave their moorings. In the kindness of their hearts (for these people are frequently very kind) they insisted that their passengers should eat now; but the sight of their cooking operations, together with her anxiety for the children, had completely destroyed her appetite.

By the time they had eaten, the tide had turned, and the wind was directly against them; so, after several fruitless efforts to get under way, they concluded to wait until afternoon, when they expected the tide would turn, so they could pull up to the ship. So here they were obliged to sit, another live-long day, in

the burning sun, within sight of the ship, where the husband and father was waiting for them in great anxiety. But every unpleasant road has an end; so, just at sunset, they found themselves safely at the desired place, though almost worn out with fatigue, heat and hunger.

After dining on board, they seated themselves in their small boat, and started for home, twenty miles up the river, just at dusk. They soon found their frail craft—which contained fourteen persons, beside their baggage—had sprung some of her seams, and the water came in so fast that constant baling could scarcely keep her in safety. But without serious accident they reached home about two o'clock in the morning.

Next day a paralysis of the neck came upon Rufus, in consequence of being so long exposed to the heat, and, for some days, he was worse than before he went to the ship. Little Charlie's face was blistered too, and, in a short time, most of the skin came off.

But uncomfortable and tedious, as was the return from the ship to the shore, when the mother and children came, they had great cause of thankfulness that it was no worse; for the very next time those Lascars undertook to row that boat from the ship to the mouth of the river, through their carelessness, the current carried them a long way down the coast, and, not knowing where they were, it was three weeks before they got back to the mouth of the river! Surely God sets bounds to the trials of his people. Neither of the children could have lived in an open boat, exposed to such hardships for that length of time.

While Rufus and his little brother were suffering so much from the heat during the day the boat lay at Paknam, as I mentioned before, great numbers of small Siamese fishing boats passed up the river close by the ship, which they were desiring to reach; but not one man could be persuaded (for pity or pay) to carry a note to the captain requesting him to

send a boat for these children and their mother.

The Bible says, "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty;" and here you see it proved.

The Siamese would not do this small favour, though they were told how much the poor little children were suffering from heat and hunger. Perhaps you never think why it is that neighbours and friends nurse and watch the sick with so much kindness and care; but I can tell you, it is the influence of the gospel which so softens and refines society, that those even who do not love the Saviour, bear no resemblance to the heathen in their social relations.

Had you been born a heathen in Siam, no one, except your parents, would ever trouble themselves to care for you when sick; and even then, your mother, who is now so kind, so gentle, so patient, so watchful, might lie and sleep all night, while you were by her side crying with pain. These things my own eyes have

seen, and my own ears have heard; yet no heathen nation has been found with less of cruelty in their political and domestic relations, than the Siamese.

Perhaps, by this time, you will wish me to go on with my story.

Little Rufus was taken to the ship, as I told you, just at the commencement of the cool season, which is such weather as we have here in July and August; I mean the days were so, for the nights are hotter there than any we ever have in this country.

During this season of six or eight weeks, Rufus was better; but, with the hot, dry season which followed, his disease returned, and his little brother, who had always been so healthy and happy, sickened, and, ere his parents were alarmed, his disease assumed a fatal form, and in a few days this sweet little baby was transferred to the fold of the Good Shepherd!

Thus Rufus was left—the only child of his afflicted parents—and, by his per-

fect obedience and quiet, manly conduct, he proved a great comfort to them. Still he continued ill, and became emaciated to a degree which few of us had ever before seen; and his wrinkled, anxious-looking face plainly indicated that disease had taken a strong and fast hold of his infant frame. He was so feeble, that from the time he was fourteen months old until he was nearly three years, he did not walk at all.

When, some months after the death of Charlie, God gave him another brother, he was delighted, but looked upon him as a precious gift, over which he was to watch and for which he was to take care, rather than as a companion and playmate, like the other. He took ceaseless care of this little brother, always noticing it if he was disposed to do mischief, or said any improper words. There often is difficulty in keeping the children of missionaries, when they first begin to talk—before they fully understand the meaning of what they say—

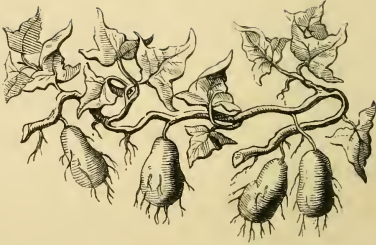
from using words which the Bible classes under the head, of “the filthy conversation of the heathen.”

For this and similar causes, missionary mothers have found it necessary to keep their children constantly with them, and they have succeeded—at least in Siam—in preserving their children from the degrading habits and conversation of the heathen; for no better or prettier children can be found in this country than those dear ones, born and trained through their infantile years, in Siam. In that country native mothers often teach their lisping little children the whole round of vile and abusive language, that they may be laughed at as witty!

When Rufus was three years old his parents took him a short voyage to Singapore, which you remember was the place of his birth. There they found kind friends to welcome them, and make their visit both pleasant and profitable.

Here every thing was new and strange to Rufus—so many white people—sol-





Siamese potatoe. p. 47.

diers in uniform—horses drawing palankeens—buffaloes drawing carts, &c. The large, elegant houses, too, were a wonder. He had seen only the small, rude places which the missionaries lived in at Bangkok; and, indeed, every thing was as new to him then as Bangkok, with its strange-looking houses, temples, and people, would be to you. Here were playmates for Rufus, and he enjoyed them as much as any other little boy could enjoy them.

Very soon his health began to improve, for here the heat was not so intense as in Siam; and here, too, he had good, nice, fresh bread, so that he was not obliged to eat rice or rice-cakes all the time, as he was before when there was no bread or flour. Whatever may be thought of rice as a diet for the sick here, the experience of years has proved that invalid foreigners, in a hot climate, cannot use it as the only food.

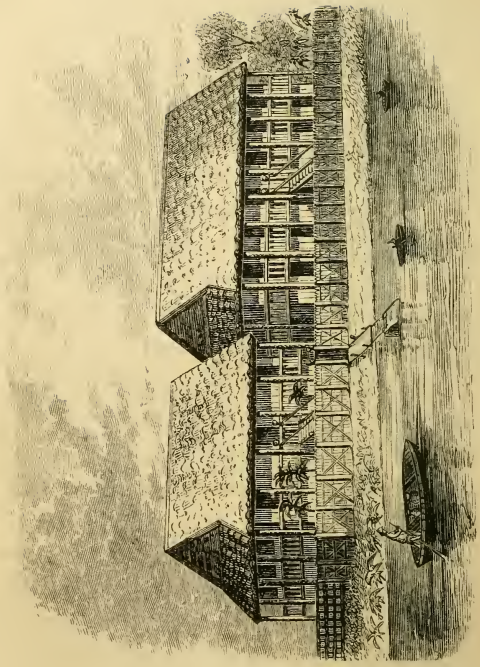
But to return. For some time his entire restoration seemed doubtful, and a

favourable opportunity offered for him to be brought to the United States. All the physicians who were consulted on the subject being fully satisfied that a residence in a cool climate would be the only sure means of his perfect recovery, his parents finally concluded to embrace the opportunity of sending him to their far-off friends.

But their kind heavenly Father would spare them this trial. Rufus's health improved rapidly from that time, and before the time came for him to embark, he was considered well.

The object of their visit to Singapore being thus accomplished, they returned to Siam, after an absence of several months; happy to be at home again, to meet their missionary associates, and be among the particular people for whom they laboured.

When they arrived, the mission-houses, which had been built by order of the king, were so nearly completed that they went into them immediately. The house



on the left hand of the cut was little Rufus's home. Even now I seem to see him on the broad, open verandah in front, playing with his baby-brother, or with each tiny hand on a baluster, peeping his face between, watching the people as they land, and come up by the floating wharf, which you see running from the gate down into the river. Or you might see them at another time, looking and listening, as the pedlars (a little way from the shore) row their boats up and down, crying their wares in the most approved sing-song tone, which can be understood only by those long accustomed to the sound; or, admiring the beautiful scarlet flowers of the pomegranate tree, which stands just by the right side of the stairs; or, as he looks at the splendid aloe plant, wondering what is put into the extract to make it "taste so bad."

That house, with its tiled roof, its coarse, basket-work ceiling, and its sides of rough, dark, teak boards, put on up and down, like a country barn, was a

happy home to this dear child; for there dwelt hearts filled with love to God, their fellow-men, and each other. With these, a hovel may become the abode of happiness; without them, a palace is only the dwelling-place of misery.

At Siam they found a barrel of flour, which had been sent from Boston for them; and while it lasted Rufus continued well, though it was the most unhealthy season of the year; but as soon as he was obliged to return to a rice diet, his disease returned, and very soon he was as ill as before he was taken to Singapore.

About this time he told—what is believed to be—his first and only lie. He was very fond of assisting in little things about the house, and frequently put the dishes upon the table, preparatory to a meal. One day, while engaged in this way, he took a rice cake from the cupboard, and ate it. In that climate, and particularly in the case of feeble children, eating between meals could never be

allowed, and, for this reason, he had been forbidden to help himself to food when he pleased; this he understood. A native woman saw him, and told his mother. He denied eating it. His mother took him away by himself, told him what a great sin he had committed, first, in disobeying his parents, and then in denying the fact. He seemed horror-stricken at the thought. He wished to pray that God would forgive him, and showed signs of sincere repentance. After that, he was never known to tell an untruth, or to eat without permission, though to the latter offence he was peculiarly tempted; for, from the nature of his disease he suffered constantly from hunger, and for years ate according to the discretion of his parents, and not according to his appetite.

He was accustomed to witness scenes of idolatrous feasting and amusement, as the processions passed by or near the house. He used to go to play in the grounds around the temples, these

being the only places where cleanliness prevailed, and which dogs were not allowed to enter. He had frequently seen their idols, and often expressed a dislike to passing one forty or fifty feet high which stood on the bank of the river, a short distance from the house. Still he did not seem to comprehend why they were made, or the purpose for which they were used, until one evening, when about five years old, his mother was leading him past one of their temples, situated in a beautiful, retired grove, when he heard the Buddhist priests reciting, or rather croaking out their prayers. He inquired, with fear and wonder, what the noise was? The answer to that question made an indelible impression on his heart, and he afterwards expressed the oft-repeated wish, that his parents, his friends, and himself should ever remember to pray for "the poor people who prayed to idols."

The next year after their visit to Singapore, the parents of Rufus, together



Durian Tree. p. 54.

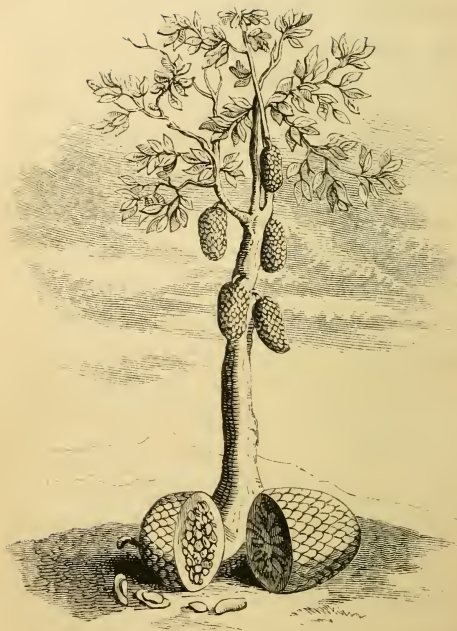
with the family of Dr. T., (one of the missionary physicians,) went to stay a few months at a place on the sea-coast, about sixty miles from Bangkok, hoping the sea-air would benefit both Mrs. T. and little Rufus.

The two missionaries had been there and put up a shelter to protect their families from the sun and rain, for it could hardly be called a house. Tall, slim trees were cut, and trimmed, and made fast in the ground; then poles of bamboo tied across at the top, and all this top and sides thatched with leaves, resembling corn leaves, only larger. There was not one nail in all the outside, and only ten spikes in the whole fabric. It was fastened together by rattans. For a floor they threw sand on the rock, then plastered it over, after which it was covered with a mat.

When the house was finished, the missionaries returned to Bangkok; and, after packing up a few articles of household furniture, took their families, and at sunset

left the place in a tiny little sloop which was used for running up and down the river. They arrived at the mouth of the river next morning, and soon put out to sea to cross over to the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam to a point about sixty miles distant. Towards evening the wind rose to a gale, and their little bark danced like a feather upon the white-crested waves; but, through the watchful care of their heavenly Pilot, they reached the shore before morning, when they anchored, and remained until after breakfast, and then went to their new *home*. I wish you could have seen it just as it then was. This was in March, 1839, and the very night in which south-eastern Asia was visited by that severe earthquake which destroyed so many heathen temples in Burmah.

Here they found a different country from Bangkok and its vicinity. At this place were hills, large forest trees, and immense rocks of coarse granite. At one place was a large fissure in the rock, re-



Jack fruit tree. p. 55.

sembling an immense basin, from which the place took its name: Ang Hin, or Jar of Stone.

Here also were extensive gardens of fruits, as the bananas, or plantains, mangoes, oranges, pine-apples, and, a little farther down the coast, groves of durian. This latter fruit grows on large trees, like common forest-trees. The Siamese and Malays esteem it very highly, and so do foreigners, if they eat it at all. Those who do not like it, even to craving, feel a great loathing of it, and insist that it smells like decayed onions.

Trees (beside fruit trees) grew all about here. Among them was the tall, slim bamboo, which, when it is thirty or forty feet high, is so small around that you might encircle it with your two little hands.

All this was as much of a change to Rufus as the country is to a New York or Philadelphia child.

There little Rufus had the benefit of sea air, and an opportunity of playing

on the seashore during the latter part of the day.

The people did not travel in boats, as in Bangkok, but in carts drawn by Indian buffaloes or on their backs. Sometimes they use elephants. The Indian buffaloes are not at all like the animals we call by the same name. They are very much like an ox, only larger, with wide-spreading, fierce-looking horns. Their hair—the little they have—is of a mouse colour. Elephants are very cheap there. A small one, such as are usually seen in caravans here, might be bought for twenty-five or thirty dollars.

At this place the people were very civil, though they huddled around the missionaries in perfect astonishment at seeing the white women and children. The light hair of the latter was an object of special wonder. For the first few days they would collect about the door by dozens; even the sick and infirm could not stay away, and many came while yet covered with the small-pox, be-

ing unable to restrain their curiosity any longer. When spoken to on ordinary subjects they appeared polite and intelligent; but when Christ and his salvation were mentioned, their stupid, vacant stare, or quick departure, showed how dark their minds were, and how willing they were to have them so.

The two families enjoyed the fresh sea-breeze and the hilly country very much. In the cool of the day they would ramble along the shore, while the children dug in the sand, ran and jumped on the rocks, or picked shells from the water's edge.

But it was all to no purpose so far as the invalids were concerned; and Dr. T. finally determined to return to America with his suffering wife. Rufus continued to have repeated attacks of his old complaint, and in no way seemed benefitted. Dr. T. seeing this, offered to take him with his own family, and see him safely in the care of his grand-parents in this country.

It is not easy to conceive how these fond parents felt when the question was seriously agitated, shall we send this feeble, sickly child, not yet past infancy, far, far away, never to see him again in this world? But there was no prospect of his recovery in that hot climate, and they could not doubt that they ought to send him to their dear native land, and still dearer home; and that they should embrace this opportunity of trying the last expedient for his restoration to health, was equally plain.

Though they had ever felt he was the Lord's, yet from this time they looked upon him as still more entirely given to Christ, as if hereafter, the care of his earthly parents must cease, and his dependence be directly on his Saviour. Much and earnestly did they pray that they might not be separated from their dear child until they saw evidence that he was in truth one of Christ's dear lambs, and that hereafter they should meet him with all the sanctified ones above.

About this time he was fretting at something which did not please him—and here I would say nervous irritation is a distinguishing and most distressing feature of the disease which was preying upon him for more than four years. When, in one of these fretful moods, his mother said, “Rufus, do you know it is wicked to fret so much, and that God is displeased when you do it?” He looked up in wonder, and said, “No, mother, I did not know it was wicked: is it?” From that time he was not known to be irritated and peevish.

After it was determined to send him to America, his mother was very much occupied in preparing clothes for the voyage. It would be nearly, or quite, four months long, and, as no washing could be done on the ship, he must have clothing sufficient for all this time. Besides, he would need woollen clothes for the American climate; whereas in Siam he wore only a white cotton dress. While his mother was engaged in this sad work, he

would sit by, and often asked for sewing, for he was too feeble to engage in the active sports which boys love so much.

One day, a little circumstance occurred which will not be soon forgotten. He wished to sew, but, as usual, must do something he thought useful. His mother gave him an old handkerchief to darn. He worked very diligently until every hole was sewed up; then, holding it out by two corners, he looked upon it with great complacency and said, "Now, when you" (he always called himself *you*) "go to America, and mother sees this handkerchief, then she will know you mended it." The old handkerchief was thrown aside, and nothing more thought of the circumstance until several months after his death, when his mother was reminded of it by finding the handkerchief. None but a bereaved mother knows the emotions which such an occurrence awakens!

After he was told of coming to this country, he used to ask innumerable

questions respecting it. Once he said: "When will you" (himself) "come back?"

He was told never, unless he should become a Christian, and could come back to teach the natives.

"When will father and mother come to America?"

"Never, if they are well, and can remain in Siam."

"When will Charlie come?"

"In ten or twelve years, if he lives." This gave him great pleasure, and he often spoke of seeing his brother again.

But many little incidents, which occurred during the last days he was permitted to stay on earth, though deeply interesting to his parents and friends, might not be so considered by our young readers; therefore, we will only say that his parents left Ang Hin about the middle of June, to take him to the ship in which he was to sail for Singapore, on his way to America; that his father and little brother proceeded up the river to

Bankok; that his mother remained on the ship with him ten days, and then took her final leave of her weak, sickly child, not expecting to see his face again; and that his father then came to the ship, and stayed with him as long as he lived, and then returned to Bankok with his lifeless remains. We will close our narrative with a letter, written by the afflicted father to the maternal grandparents of this dear child, giving particulars of his last days.

BANKOK, (SIAM,) July 16, 1839.

DEAR PARENTS:—We have already informed you of our leaving Bankok for Ang Hin, a place near the head of the Gulf of Siam, on the east coast of Siam. Dr. T. and family went with us, he hoping such a change might benefit Mrs. T., who had been suffering from illness a long time; and we, having the same hopes with regard to Rufus. All expected much for the invalids, from the sea-air. We arrived at Ang Hin the 2d of March.

Rufus seemed to improve for a time. Then his old complaint returned with more than usual violence.

After a thorough trial, finding Mrs. T.'s health still failing, and their little one also very feeble, Dr. T. decided to return to America. He kindly offered to take Rufus with him. We thought so good an opportunity should be improved, for there was no reason to hope he could live much longer in this climate. We, accordingly, made preparations for sending him "home."

About the last of May, Dr. T. and family left us, to go up to Bangkok, for the purpose of arranging their affairs and engaging a passage to Singapore.

Soon after they left us, Rufus became much worse, and Charlie was also taken sick. Our prospects, as you may well suppose, appeared dark—sixty miles from our missionary friends and physician—among heathen strangers—without boats to leave the place, and our children sinking under a disease, of which multitudes

of European children yearly die in India. But the Lord was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and sustained us.

On the 12th of June, Dr. T. came to us, for the purpose of taking Rufus to the English ship *Gulnare*, Captain Williams, which was to take them to Singapore. The day previous Rufus was very sick, and we thought it doubtful whether he could live to reach Singapore, or even the ship. But this was our last hope. As Charlie was still unwell, and we without helpers, we concluded to leave the place altogether for the present, and accompany our dear child to the ship. We packed up our household stuff in great haste; and then gave directions to a Chinaman to get the things to Bangkok as best he could.

We left Ang Hin on the morning of the 14th, in a large covered boat, and, after as pleasant a passage of thirty or forty miles as we could have, in our circumstances, we reached the ship at four in the afternoon. She was then lying

just outside of the river's mouth, about twenty-five miles from Bangkok.

There I left M. and Rufus, with Dr. and Mrs. T., and Mr. D., one of the Baptist brethren from Bangkok, who had come to try the sea air for his health.

I took Charlie, and the same evening proceeded up the river towards Bangkok, where we arrived, after the narrowest possible escape from capsizing, on the 15th, at midnight.

For two or three days Rufus improved rapidly, and was entirely free from his complaint; but on Monday, (the 17th,) M. noticed he could not voluntarily move the middle finger on his right hand, and by evening he was unable to hold up his head.

These alarming symptoms continuing, M. wrote, wishing me to go to the ship immediately. Dr. T. also wrote, consulting Dr. B. in the case. Both doctors pronounced it a paralysis, and his case very critical. Immediately I started for the ship, which I reached early the next

morning, (Friday.) By that time Rufus had much improved. M. being nearly exhausted with fatigue, together with the difficulty of accommodating both of us in the ship, and Charlie's need of a mother's care, led us to think it best she should return to Bangkok in the boat. She left us the same morning, (June 21st,) after taking, as she then thought, the last farewell of that dear child, over whom she had watched, night and day, during an illness of more than five years. It is in vain to try to describe the feelings which filled our bosoms at that sad moment. The Lord be praised for sustaining M. in that trying hour! I remained with the little sufferer to administer to his wants.

After M. left the vessel, he still continued to improve, and the paralysis entirely disappeared for several days. We entertained hopes of his entire recovery, and that he might yet reach you. But on Friday, just a week after his mother left us, the disease returned, which was

soon checked by prompt measures; and on Sabbath morning he appeared better than before, since he came to the ship. This was a short calm. At eight that same morning, he suddenly became worse; was very weak, and complained of a pain in his head. He frequently called for water during the day, but could not retain it on his stomach.

The paralysis returned, and he was evidently drawing near his end. Medicine lost all power before night. We put a blister on the back of his neck, hoping it might relieve his head—at ten in the evening I dressed it; he drank a little water, and said his head was “better now.” At twelve I gave him some medicine, after which he seemed a little convulsed; but he soon rested easy again for a short time. I wet his head; he said, “it is most well.” I asked him if he wanted to see mother? He said, “yes.” I then asked him if he wanted to go and live with Jesus? He replied “yes,” and added, that he loved Jesus. These were his last words. Again

he was a little convulsed. I called Dr. T., who pronounced him dying. He lay nearly motionless until twenty minutes before three, when his spirit so gently departed to the bosom of the Good Shepherd, that it was difficult to know the moment when it left the body!

Thus, my dear parents, were we called to part with our first-born, after having watched over him five years and five months, and most of the time in circumstances peculiarly trying, as you already know; but we have strong confidence that he has gone to that blessed world, where

“ Sin and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.”

From his birth we had daily consecrated him to God, and felt that we desired nothing for him but that he might “ be the Lord’s servant forever.”

We trust a covenant-keeping God has heard, and answered our prayers. Our dear child gave increasing evidence of a

change of heart, as he drew near the close of life. We noticed for several weeks before his death a marked change in his disposition, and a pleasure manifested in conversation about Christ and heavenly things, and an absence of that terror of death which he had ever shown from the first time he comprehended the fact that he must die. His disease was such as to make the sufferer irritable and feverish; but his last days were marked by a tranquil, lovely state of mind; not a murmuring word escaped him, and he showed more anxiety lest "mother should get tired," than he did for his own comfort.

We had been very particular in explaining to him the meaning and nature of prayer; that he, with all others, was a sinner, and must have a change of nature; that he must love God, and, if he would be good, he must ask in prayer for a new heart, &c. All this he evidently understood; but seemed most interested in the idea, that Jesus

Christ would hear little children when they asked him for things they needed, just as his mother would hear him when he asked her for things which were for his good.

After he was removed into Mr. D.'s cabin, ten days before his death, Mr. D. overheard him praying whenever I went out for a few moments. Rufus thought him asleep, or out of the cabin, and took those opportunities for secret prayer. Only now and then a word could be heard distinctly, such as, "I pray," "Jesus Christ," and the like.

Providence kindly ordered all our circumstances. The officers showed every sympathy possible; and an English gentleman on board offered to take me, and the precious remains of our dear child, to Bangkok in his boat.

How to break the news to my already afflicted M. was the cause of many an anxious thought and earnest prayer as I slowly sailed towards my lonely home. When I arrived it was midnight, and all

were locked in soft slumber. I knocked. M. opened the door, and said, "Is it you, my dear? Why did you leave Rufus so soon? and how is he? I felt the cold drops start to my forehead, and could only answer: "Our Father has been very gracious to us; he has taken our dear child to himself." Though this midnight call from the Master, as you may suppose, was nearly overwhelming, the Lord's sustaining grace was sufficient, even in this hour, and "blessed be his name!

The next morning, at eleven, we laid the mortal remains of our dear child by his brother's side, in the peaceful grave. Mr. D. conducted the services, which were closed by singing that beautiful hymn—

"Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb."

Thus, my dear parents, I have given you a very brief account of the last days of our first-born. We had intended to send him home to your care; but we doubt not he has gone to a better home,

and to the care of Infinite Love. Rather let us bless the Lord that he has taken so many of our dear kindred and friends to heaven, and given us a hope that, in his own good time, we ourselves shall enjoy the same glory. Oh, what a joyful meeting will that be at his right hand, and none the less so for the painful separations and trials we shall have passed through here.

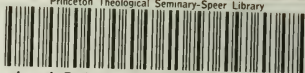
May the God of all consolation comfort your hearts, as he does ours, and bring us all at length, a happy family, into his heavenly kingdom!

This the daily prayer of your affectionate son,
CHARLES —.

THE END.



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