

ACROSS THE SEAS

Edited by F. S. Arnot, in conjunction with Editors of "Echoes of Service."

EDITOR'S LOG.

OUR first picture this month is given to illustrate letters from the Straits Settlements, and also Miss Pollock's from China. Those

their backs, and if you look carefully at the man who is holding the parasol you will see that his finger nails are long and uncut. Chinamen who have to work hard with their hands roll up their tails and cut their nails.

+ + +

THINK of the hundreds of millions of people that those two represent. Some one has likened the Chinese nation to "a mountain of sand." Who can move a mountain of sand? Well, do not let us be discouraged, but remember how God gave Solomon "largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore" (1 Kings 4. 29). And let us ask God to enlarge our hearts big enough to take in even this great nation.

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WHEN Mr. Whitefield was preaching in New England a lady and her little daughter were converted. In a transport of joy, the latter exclaimed, "If only all the world knew about Christ! I wish I could tell *everybody*," and running across the road to her friend the shoemaker she told

him of the love of Christ, and not only him, but many others, so that in a few months more than fifty persons heard and accepted Christ's salvation.

This little girl's love for "everybody" led

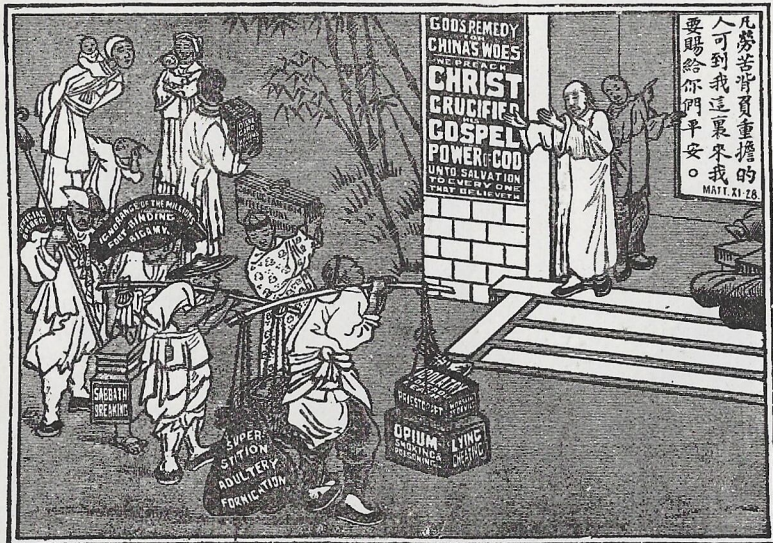


TWO CHINAMEN OF THE EDUCATED CLASS.

two Chinamen belong to the educated class, otherwise they would not have knobs on the tops of their hats, nor have their trousers drawn so tightly around their legs. Then they have their "pig-tails" hanging down

her to love the shoemaker and tell him of Jesus. So I am sure you would find that those who loved the Chinese most, and the Africans most, would love their own dear neighbours very much indeed, and they would give no rest to their feet in their desire to carry the Gospel to them.

telling us of a certain converted Chinaman, named Tsui, who was formerly content to worship dead idols. He shows us how Tsui found the priest to be cheating the people by telling them that the idol could eat, and that food must be brought to him. The people brought offerings of bread, beef,



GOD'S REMEDY FOR CHINA'S WOES—"CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED."

THE MALAY PENINSULA.

THIS is a long tongue of land stretching down from the continent of Asia. Steamers on their way to China go through the "Straits of Malacca," between the Malay Peninsula and the island of Sumatra, and then turning round the little island of Singapore go northward to great China. Some spots on the Malay Peninsula, with the islands of Penang and Singapore, are called the "*Straits Settlements*," and belong to England; but most of the Peninsula is made up of *Malay Native States* that are under British protection. Into all these parts the yellow-skinned Chinese have swarmed from their own thickly peopled country. There are also black Malays (Mohammedans), and Europeans.

Our first letter is from Mr. Thos. Baird, written from Kwala Lumpor, in the Malay State of Selangor. He begins at once by

and fruit, and with these the priest himself fed the idol, saying to the people that if they came back in the morning they would find the idol empty and ready for more food.

"One man came to the temple, however, a little earlier than usual, and, on opening the door, with its old, rusty, creaking hinges, to his astonishment about a dozen rats leapt out of the idol's mouth. 'Ah,' he said, 'now I see where the food goes to.' So he put no more faith in the

idols, nor in the priests who told stories about them." Thus he was delivered from priest and idol, and afterwards heard about the Saviour who, by His death, became the Bread of Life for him.

Our second letter is from Mr. A. Thoburn, of Singapore. He tells us of another yellow-skinned native of China, who was anxious about his soul for fifteen long years—and they *must* have been long to him. He lived in the city of Tsoû-chiu, in China, and it was his business to paint flowers and figures on China cups and pots. One day his master invited him to eat rice at his house. When they sat down together to eat, his master closed his eyes and gave thanks to God (he must have been a Christian). "To whom is he speaking?" thought our friend; "there are no idols in the room." So he cautiously asked his master to whom he was

praying. The master then told him about God who cannot be seen by us, but Who sees us, and Who hears us when we pray to Him in the name of Jesus. Even hearing thus of such a God, spoiled this poor man's idol worship, so he resolved to give it up, and in China this always means persecution; to escape which he left the country and came to Singapore. There, to be sure, he saw many strange sights—wide roads, high houses, and, above all, the "fire carriage" (train)—which so astonished him that for the time he forgot about his anxiety to know and worship God. Mr. Thoburn stops here to say that he thinks it is often so with us, too: the great and wonderful things of this world often tempt us to forget God. But Li-teng-han—for that is his name—began again to be troubled and anxious. He tried the Mohammedan religion, but that could not satisfy him. At last, however, through another Chinaman who was converted, he heard of Jesus who came to make God known to us, and to bear away our sins, and *that* satisfied him.

VISITING IN CHINA.

DESIRING to give the women of Ki-san another opportunity of hearing the gospel, three of us, accompanied by a native sister, spent last Tuesday among them. We did not travel this time by buffalo cart, as on former occasions, but by boat; as what was before a stretch of sand is now almost entirely covered by the waters of the river.

Although only five miles from Wu-ch'en, it took us over two hours to reach our destination, having only one man to pole the boat. We started at six in the morning, the air was cool and pleasant, and the time passed easily as, with our Chinese sister, we sang:

"Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus,"

and read the old, favourite chapter John 14.

On reaching the village we had a very hearty reception, and some nice ladies came out of their houses to hear our words, and several asked for copies of the Gospels.

We could do only a little there, and had to be satisfied with a longing look at two other hamlets, passing on to another village a mile away, and then returned home.

A man, however, followed us in a few days,

asking us to visit his sick child. After a little consultation Miss Norman and I decided to go, fearing to send medicine, and soon we set out, accompanied by one woman, the man having promised to take us there and back in the boat he came in.

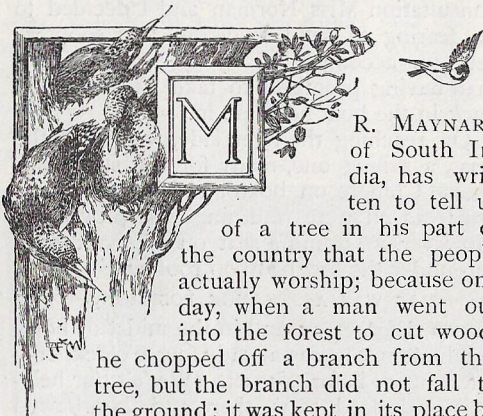
On reaching the river side, we found the boat, a sailing one, ready for the start, with twelve Chinese on board, and it was quite a crush, as all were returning with provisions. However, we found a seat on an overturned tub under the low bamboo roofing.

IT WAS A STRANGE POSITION,

cramped for space, and in the midst of noisy neighbours. It was already four o'clock, only a few hours before sunset. We felt our helplessness indeed, so we there and then bowed our heads and committed ourselves to our Master, whose errand we were on. On landing we were led to one of the little hamlets passed on the previous visit. Little could be done for the sick child, but we spoke a few words to the inhabitants, who all came round to receive us.

Upon making our way back to the river-side, we found that our boatmen were not there. At last one appeared, who said that they would not take us back to Wu-ch'en that night unless we gave him 400 cash. We had not so much money with us, and the proper fare was five cash each. So we knelt down, and in the presence of half a dozen heathen men and women we asked God to help us. But the boatman, instead of receiving us, pulled the boat off and anchored her some distance from the shore, then left us, and was soon lost to sight in the village. Meanwhile the sun had set, and the short twilight was giving place to night. Having waited an hour, and knowing how the Chinese boatmen avoid travelling in the dark, we turned our steps to the village in order to find a lodging, and were making our way along the narrow path between rice fields, when, to our great joy, we met the father of the sick child, bringing the boatman with him. Together they drew in the boat, helped us on board, and, without any promise of payment, started to take us home, where we arrived, after a tedious journey in the dark, at half-past ten at night.] M. R. POLLOCK.

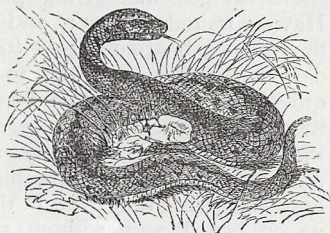
TWO STORIES FROM INDIA.



R. MAYNARD
of South India,
has written to tell us

of a tree in his part of the country that the people actually worship; because one day, when a man went out into the forest to cut wood, he chopped off a branch from this tree, but the branch did not fall to the ground; it was kept in its place by the other branches that were growing thickly around, so he left it and went on chopping elsewhere. By-and-by he came back again and saw that this branch that had been cut off still lived, its leaves had not withered nor fallen off; so he went and told the people that a great miracle had been wrought, that there was a branch cut off from its tree and yet it lived. "Ah," said the wise men of the Hindoos, "that is because a god lives in the tree; we must go and pray to this god." So the poor people, in all the villages round, came with their sacrifices to offer to the tree.

The second story comes from Mr. McLean, who lives in the Godavery Delta, East Coast of India, and is about a little black baby, whose father and mother were no longer worshippers of idols and trees. This little baby was evidently just old enough to crawl. She had scrambled out to the yard, and was playing and grubbing away, when the mother observed to her horror that baby had hold of a snake. What was the mother to do? She dared not try to take it from her, for then the snake would have bitten the child; so she knelt down and prayed to God. Her short, earnest prayer was hardly finished, when



a cat came across the yard, and the little baby threw away the snake and began playing with his old friend pussy.

These two stories show us what *true* and *false* religion is in all lands. The Lord said to the Samaritan woman, "Ye worship ye know not what, we know what we worship." Both in India and England new gods are coming up every day—gods of fashion, gods of pleasure, of greedy gain, and religious gods—and men are running after them. But when Jesus is received into the heart all this is changed; we then worship the only true God, and can bring to Him every little trouble in perfect confidence that He hears us.

ABOUT AFRICA.—II.

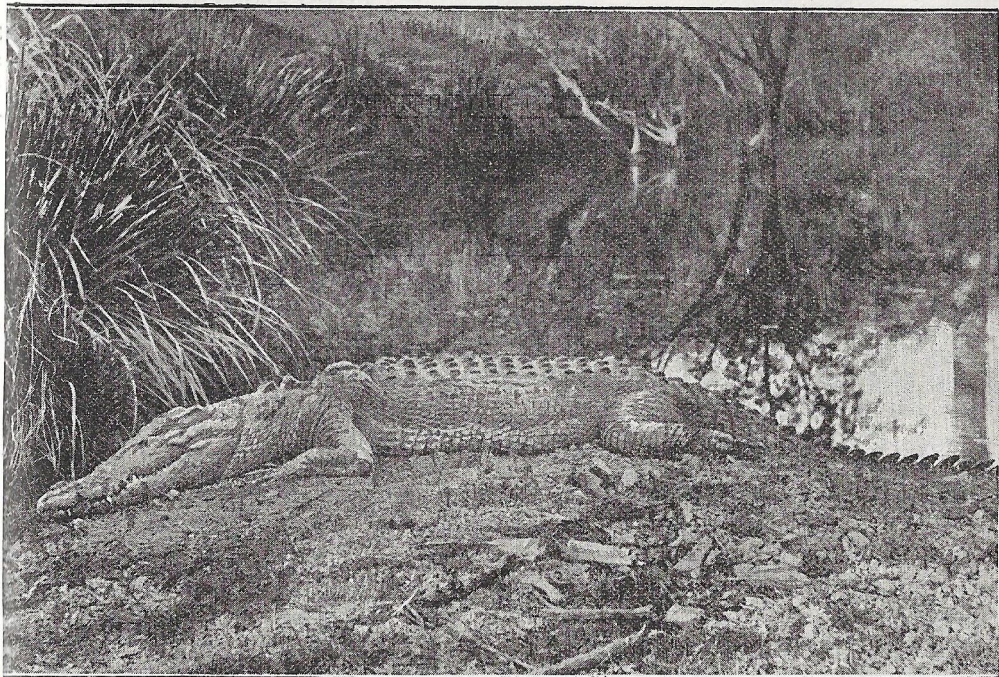
AFRICAN WORSHIP.

THE first chapter of Romans tell us how the descendants of Noah, including of course the children of Ham, ceased to glorify God as God, and becoming vain in their own imaginations, they began to worship "men, birds, four-footed beasts, and creeping things." And that is just what the nations of Africa are doing to-day, and must have been doing for many long centuries. They do not pretend to worship God, but they worship the spirits of their dead relations, and also living animals.

Crocodiles are worshipped by tribes living on the river Nile: also, in South Africa there is a tribe called the *Ba-Kuena*, because they *bina*, i.e. "dance to" the crocodile.

The serpent is worshipped by several West Coast tribes. The natives along the Upper Zambesi believe that a great serpent lies at the bottom of that river. If anyone is drowned in the Zambesi, the people say nothing, but solemnly shake their heads, believing that the unfortunate person has been swallowed by this monster. I knew of a little baby-boy being given as a sacrifice to him; first, his fingers were chopped off, and the blood from the bleeding stumps was sprinkled over two war drums that the king wished to consecrate; then he was thrown alive into the river!

Another tribe, the *Matotela*, worship the ox. They knock out their front teeth, to make themselves like the animal they worship. Dick, who was for several years my



CROCODILE PHOTOGRAPHED WHEN ASLEEP.

faithful servant, and is a servant of Jesus Christ too, belongs to this tribe, and carries about the mark of his former worship.

A member of the *Ba-shilanzofu* tribe (meaning those-who-hold-the-elephant-sacred) told Mr. C. Swan the following legend as to how they came to call themselves by that name:—"Long ago some men of this tribe crossed a river to hunt on the other side; when they wanted to return, they found that the river had swollen so that they could not ford it. As they were wondering what to do, an elephant came along, and seeing they were troubled, asked what was the matter. 'Oh!' said the men, 'we are troubled because we cannot cross the river to go to our own people.' Thereupon the elephant told the hunters to get on his back, and he would carry them over; and so they reached the other side in safety. Ever since then they had looked upon the elephant as their sacred animal."

The worship, however, of the spirits of dead relatives is the principal part of the African's

religion. They believe that only the bodies of men die, and that their spirits live, and can remain in the village and trouble living people: so as soon as a person dies, they begin drumming and wailing, and making a great noise, and if this drumming were to cease too soon, they think the spirit—especially of a man or woman who had been powerful when alive—would come back and trouble them. Sometimes when I went to visit these people, the kind chief would send a company to dance and beat drums in front of my hut door all night, so that the white man should not be troubled by wandering spirits, and have a good night's rest!

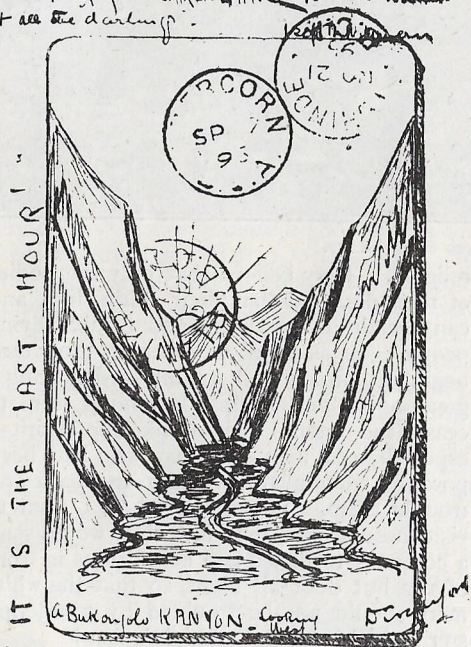
If sickness should appear in the village, the doctor generally says that some spirit is troubling them, and that they had better sacrifice oxen, goats, and fowls. Strange to say, sheep and doves are not used in Africa for sacrifice, and one African told me the reason was that they did not cry out when being killed, showing that sheep and doves do not value their lives, and that the spirits,

not hearing the animal cry, would not know that a sacrifice had been made.

This part of our story will help you to understand something of the interest with which the Ethiopian eunuch read Isaiah 53, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 8. 32). And as Philip "preached to him Jesus," I have no doubt but that he explained *why* Jesus was silent before those who accused Him, and put Him to death. It was because He stood in our stead, who were sinners indeed, and so He had not one word to say for us. *We* deserved to die, and He died in our stead.

F. S. A.

GREETINGS from GARENGANZE to Mr. Crawford
+ see the darling!



This exact copy of post-card sent as a New Year greeting from Mr. Dan. Crawford, Lake Mwero, Central Africa, represents one of the mountain glens opening into the Lake. The sun *setting* behind the hills in the distance, reminds us forcibly that the night is at hand, and that the opportunity of making Christ known will soon be for ever past.

THE CHILD WIDOW.

I AM only a little child, at least in years, but I feel as though I had lived a very long time in this weary world. I am so tired of everything that sometimes I think I should like to die; but perhaps death would be worse than living, it is all so dark and unknown, that only to think of it makes me shudder.

Perhaps you want to know why I am so miserable; I will tell you. My name is Sitara. I am a little Hindu girl and a widow; I have heard it said that away in England there are no little girl widows, and nobody thinks that widows are very, very wicked, but everyone is kind to them. I wish the gods had made me a little English girl, but the gods don't like me, I am so wicked, everyone says I am, or else I should not have been a widow.

When I was eight years old, that is four years ago, my husband died. I had only seen him once or twice, so I did not feel at all sorry at first; but when I found that every one was angry with me I wished—oh, how I wished!—he was still living. My mother-in-law called me "a horrid viper;" and my sister-in-law said, "I will not speak to such a wicked thing;" the barbers' wives rushed at me and tore off all my ornaments; and none of my relatives would come near me, because if my shadow fell on any one she also would become a widow.

They dragged me to the funeral; how I wish they had burned me as they used to burn widows; it would have been so much easier to have borne the scorching flames of the Sati than to live year after year my unhappy life. I am allowed only one meal of rice a day; twice a month I have to fast for twenty-four hours, besides several other fasts during the year; no matter how hot the day is I must not have one drop of water, and if I cry they say, "You are wicked; it is good for you to suffer."

I heard my cousin say once that an English lady told her that the God of the English people loves everybody, even widows; but I suppose she must have meant English widows, because they are not wicked creatures like we Hindu widows are, the gods are not angry with them. I heard her say, too, that the English lady told her a lot about death. I

wanted so much to hear what she said, but, when I asked my cousin to tell me, she drew away from me saying she could not talk to a vile thing like me. I wish I knew whether what comes after death is worse than the life I am living. I don't think it can be, but if I felt sure, I would pray every day to the God of the English people to let me die, only I am afraid he would not hear the prayer of a poor little Hindu widow.



“A LITTLE ENGLISH GIRL.”

B. H.

And here Sitarā's sad story ends. Let us hope that at least some ray of light reached her. The lady who wrote this story doubtless would know. But when we remember that there are 80,000 child widows in India, how many sad, hopelessly sad, Sitaras there must be!

The Hindu custom of marrying boys and girls when as yet they are mere babies, is the cause of there being so many young widows; for little boys die as well as old men. The girls are not allowed to marry again, their heads are shaved, and they have to spend all their days as slaves and drudges, like Sitarā.

NATIVE MISSIONARIES.

WE hope to give in this column from month to month, accounts of labours of men and women who are natives of the lands across the seas. The man out of whom the legion of demons was cast, was told by the Lord to go to his own people. And it is a greater trial sometimes to do so, than to go to other countries.

HSIA.

Dr. Case and Mr. Hogg who are labouring in North China, took a trip together through Eastern Chantung province; and the latter writes of a converted Chinaman, Hsia, who joined them in the work. “Hsia,” he writes, “when preaching in the market had his books torn from him, and his bag and its contents thrown into the gutter, by a one-

handed gambler of some notoriety in the district. “Now you think you have the victory,” said Hsia, “not at all, you are full of rage, but I have the Lord's peace in my heart, therefore the victory is mine.”

Hsia, in the course of this journey met with a brother in Christ, who was also a Chinaman, and who cheered the hearts of the little wandering company of missionaries, by telling

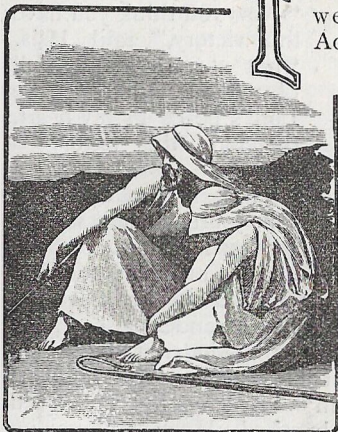
them his conversion. “Many years ago his ‘Lofty Mountain’—as a father-in-law is styled in China—was baptised. He gave his son-in-law a New Testament, and a Pilgrims Progress. “Ah!” said Kiang, for that was his name, “I used to read the Testament, but I was so dark, I hated the name *Jesus* whenever I saw it, but now it is all changed, I just wish it was repeated in every sentence ten times over.”

This man told of two nephews of his, to whom he had given New Testaments. Their father tore them up when he found his sons were reading the “foreign book,” but the boys said, “Father, you can tear the book, . . . but you cannot tear our hearts out.”

GAETA.

Mr J. S. Anderson gives the following interesting account of a visit paid by him to an Italian coast-guardsmen, who is also a missionary to his own people:—“At 4 p.m., we were on the road over the rugged mountains, and after a long ride on our mules, we arrived at the solitary coast-guard station, where our dear brother Gaeta was awaiting us. Gaeta tells me that over 100 young coast-guardsmen read God's Word, and many of them are truly converted. ‘Come and see my meeting place’ he said, so, taking us down to the sandy beach, he led us into a huge grotto or cave, and we sat down on the soft sand with the great sea before us, lime rocks on each side and above us. ‘This is my meeting place’ exclaimed Gaeta, ‘where I meet daily with the Lord, and read His Word.’”

A TOWER AND A LADDER.



IN our last lesson we compared Adam in the garden with Noah in the ark. We will, in this lesson, compare the Tower of Babel, Gen. 11, with Jacob's Ladder, chapter 28. From chapter 11. it would seem that the de-

scendants of Noah and his sons lived in fear lest another deluge should come upon the world and drown them all, in spite of the rainbow that God had caused to appear in the sky as a token that He would not again destroy the world by water. In their fear, they put their heads together to consult what to do, for all spoke the same language, and they decided that their best plan was to build a tower that would reach right up to heaven. And so they began to build the Tower of Babel with burnt bricks and slime.

Their doing so shows that they wanted to go to heaven. And I am sure there is not a man or a woman, a boy or a girl, in the world now who would not like to go there too. All know that in heaven they would be safe from the fear of floods, and that there would be no sorrow or suffering, so most people have some plan of their own for getting there. In Luke's Gospel, chapter 13, 25, we

see that some will think that they have got very near to the kingdom of heaven, for they will be standing at the door; but the Master of the house will not open it to them. The foolish people who built the Tower of Babel probably never thought of this, that if they did reach up to heaven they would not find the door open for them. But God did not allow them to go on building. He confused their tongues—*Babel* means "confusion"—so that they could not understand one another, and all were scattered abroad from Asia, where they were—some to Europe, some to Africa, America and the islands of the Sea.

Was it because God did not want men to come to heaven that He confused their tongues, and stopped the building of the tower? No, by no means. Genesis 28 shows us clearly the way that God has made whereby all sinful men and women can be saved. We said that this chapter tells us of "Jacob's Ladder," but that is not correct; it tells us of God's Ladder—the staircase that He showed to Jacob when He answered him in what Jacob calls "the day of my distress" (Gen. 35. 3), for Jacob had fled from his home. He had deceived his father, and had cheated his brother Esau, who therefore wanted to kill him; so he was a lonely wanderer and in great distress.

Now Jacob not only saw that the ladder reached right up to heaven, but he saw the door of heaven open at the top of it. Just read the three "beholds" in verses 32, 33. "*Behold* a ladder;" "*Behold* the angels of God ascending and descending on it;" and, "*Behold*, the Lord stood above it." Jesus on the Cross is the ladder God has made. "*I am the Way*" (John 14. 6). "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts 16. 31). F. S. A.

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