

IN MEMORIAM
MRS. DANIELLE NESSE

Several obituaries have been received from China. We quote the following

*

After a prolonged illness, Mrs. Nesse died on February 3, 1932, at her home in Sinyang, Honan, China, in glad faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Danielle Nesse was born in the diocese of Finaas, Norway on February 28, 1881. In her home and immediate neighborhood she was surrounded by positive Christian influences with the result that in early youth she fully surrendered her life to the Savior. During her childhood and early womanhood, Mrs. Nesse was an ardent reader of Christian books, especially books pertaining to Christian work in foreign lands. With her conversion came also the call to her to go to the foreign field, a call which she could not but heed. With a view to prepare herself for mission work, she entered the deaconess home in Oslo for the study of nursing, and in due time finished her work at that place.

In the year of 1909 Mrs. Nesse (at that time Miss Johannesen) came to China, sent out by the Norwegian Missionary Society, which has its field of work in the province of Hunan. In the above society she continued service till the summer of 1913 when she was married to Rev. Hans M. Nesse, who had come to China in 1910, sent out by the former Norwegian Lutheran United

Church of America. (Mr and Mrs. Nesse had grown up in the same place in Norway had played together gone to school together were confirmed the same day their ways being separated for many years until they met in the distant land of China)

Mrs. Nesse retained the true missionary spirit to the very last. Even after she was taken ill, she went, leaning on a cane, to attend the classes and the meetings with the women. During these many years she most faithfully carried on Christian work among the Chinese women. And for this work she was well qualified. She got many compliments from the Chinese for her "perfect" Chinese language. She had the knack of winning the ear and the heart of the women and thus an opportunity was given her to lead them to Christ. She always looked upon her marriage as a help rather than a hindrance in doing work among the Chinese women. As a rule the Chinese women are married, and for that reason they most readily take to a married missionary. Home, children, etc., are mutual interest to them. The children and the young people flocked also about her and for many years she continued regular hours with the school children.

Intellectually Mrs. Nesse was keen and she possessed a well balanced mind. She read many books, papers and magazines and remembered what she read. In discussion either private or public, her argument was clear and logical. Mission policies and methods of mission work were life issues with her. In all her dealings she was upright and true.

She loved truth passionately and hated all sham and glamor

In the hour of danger Mrs. Nesse was quiet and courageous. It fell to her lot, together with her husband, to do pioneer work in a new district. This work required that her husband spend much time away from home. At that time, as well as later hordes of bandits were about most of the time. She never complained of being left alone at home with the small children. She was just as anxious to reach out to the unevangelized masses as her husband was and always rejoiced when the people got the Gospel. Several times the robbers invaded the home, but Mrs. Nesse remained cool-headed in face of the danger.

In her Christian outlook Mrs. Nesse was sound and conservative. She was churchly in the good sense of that word. She loved the church, her doctrines and her ordinances most dearly. An exhibition of oratory or a lingo of pious phraseology in God's house were equally unavailing to her. In the church-services

she wanted the congregation to be brought face to face with the living God—the cross of Christ was the central theme with her

In her home, as wife and mother, Mrs. Nesse's finest qualities came into play. Her contribution to the active mission work was not given at the expense of neglecting her home. To make the home a haven of rest in the wilderness of the Chinese surroundings, became a passion with her. When she returned to China the last time the home was one heap of



ruins. But under her hand, within the short time of half a year the rubbish disappeared, and the home was made more attractive than ever. Order was restored from loft to cellar the yards were cleaned and shrubbery was planted to beautify the gardens.

With the children—she became the mother of three boys—much of her time was spent. When the children were small the evenings were spent with them in story-telling and singing of songs. As Mrs. Nesse loved the Norwegian language she set about to teach the children that language with the result that they all speak and write it fairly well. The children read their Bible and pray in their mother tongue.

About two years ago, when Mrs. Nesse was taken ill and submitted to an operation, it was with the hope of being spared yet for some years for her family and the Christian work in China. But our plans do not always tally with God's design for our lives. He wanted her higher up for a higher service. More than once during her painful sickness did she say: Oh Lord Jesus, cometh thou not soon! Jesus came and took her unto Himself!

—H. M. N

*

Mrs. Nesse had a clear understanding of the way of salvation and her parting counsel was "You who are in the Lord's

service—be urgent in preaching sin and grace!" As her end drew nigh, she had only one consuming desire, and this she expressed over and over again in the words "I want to see Jesus," "O Jesus, come soon!" Her last day was like a beautiful sunset. Unable to speak a word, unconscious of her surroundings, she lay quietly on her bed with a smile of heavenly joy upon her lips, as though she saw what we see not, a vision of Jesus ready to take her home. Many a time had she prayed that her last moment might not be one of a fierce, relentless battle, but that it might be a peaceful sleep in Jesus' name. Her prayers were answered far beyond her every expectation, and the following morning at 2:30 o'clock she passed away without a struggle into everlasting rest.

Funeral services were held for the Chinese at the Sinyang Lutheran Church on Sunday February 7 immediately following the regular services, which were made somewhat shorter than usual. A score of large scrolls received from Chinese friends as tokens of sympathy were hung in the front of the church. The coffin was borne into the church by four of the missionaries, and was covered with wreaths of evergreen and flowers.

After services, there being no train for the purpose, the coffin was carried cross country to Kikungshan, where the burial was to be, arriving there the following day. Pastor Wu Yin spoke in the Chinese, Rev. Erik Sjøvik in the Norwegian, and Dr. Skinsnes in the English language. Rev. Nesse then spoke a few words of thanks and appreciation. The procession wended its way to the cemetery on the peaceful mountain side, where the remains of Mrs. Nesse were laid to rest to await the coming of the resurrection dawn.

It was an impressive occasion—that afternoon on Kikungshan. God had touched the earth with beauty. All nature was decked with a garment, spotless white, as though to signify the robe of glory awaiting the children of God who die in Jesus' name. The Master Artist had made the picture perfect. It could not be improved upon. It could not be reproduced. The Perfect Painter had added His stroke to make the occasion impressive, and His work filled our hearts with wonder our spirits with awe, and in humble adoration His children bowed in worship and in praise before His Presence who had done all things well.

As fellow-laborers in the vineyard of God, we wish to extend to Rev. Mr. Nesse and his children our heartfelt sympathies, and assurances of our continued prayers and supplications. May God bless the memory of Mrs. Nesse!

—HAROLD H. MARTINSON.