

Original Communications.

CHINA FROM A CHRISTIAN STAND-POINT. III.

Christian Missions are planted at all the open ports of China; also at Peking, and in many of the interior cities. Up to the present time some thirty-three societies have been represented in China; while there are now in the field some three hundred and fifty male and female laborers. The number of actual church members may be about five thousand. Of course this statement does not embrace the Roman Catholic missions, which present a much larger result. Without wishing to disparage the zeal, the wisdom and self-denial of the Romish missionaries, yet I must declare that Protestant missionaries work on an entirely different principle. While the latter are as careful in admitting converts to the church as any pastor in America, Roman Catholic missionaries are not particular in regard to internal or external proofs of conversion—baptism being the essential thing. Were Protestant missionaries to pursue this course, and not demand a change of heart and of life, they might have numbered thousands where, to-day, they number hundreds. The truth is, with all the care now exercised, many Chinese gain admittance to the Church who ought not to be there. Sometimes through mercenary or other worldly motives, men join the church. In a country where population is so dense and where life is oftentimes an absolute struggle, some make a profession of Christianity because they know that the Church will keep them from actual want. But on the other hand, there are many devout and sincere followers of Christ in China who are stemming the mighty tide of unbelief, of error and irreligion sweeping all around them.

The kinds of missionary work in China are as various as Christian work in America. Fortunately the Chinese are a reading people, having not only their classics, but the school, the printed book and moral tract, the latter attacking the vices and upholding the virtues of the age. Preaching in chapels; visiting families; conversing with individuals and disseminating religious, and even scientific truth by the press, are the usual methods. In connection with all the leading missions are hospitals for dispensing medicine, for treating disease, and for surgical operations. Christian missions in this direction, are doing an immense amount of good, and winning the approbation and support of all thoughtful men, and the benediction of God. The human system in China has many diseases; and while there are many native physicians or specialists for external and internal troubles, yet they really know very little about the divine healing art. To any one longing for difficult cases and a fine hospital practice, let him go to China. These missionary hospitals have Chinese assistants, who, from time to time leave their positions with considerable knowledge and skill, and commence practice among their countrymen. I would say here, however, that one of the best physicians in China, is Dr. Wong, of Canton, a pure Chinese, educated in Europe.

The greatest obstacle, humanly speaking, to success in missionary work in China, is want of proficiency in the language. Of course, language to the teacher is his most essential instrument. China, as was remarked, is divided into eighteen Provinces. Not only do these provinces possess distinct dialects, but there are frequently different dialects in the same province. These dialects are, essentially, different languages; so that a Chinese going out of his own province, cannot converse with a fellow-countryman. It is true, there is the Mandarin, or Court dialect, spoken at the North and by the learned men in each province; but the great mass of the people know it not.

The printed language of China does not possess letters or syllables, but twenty-two characters, which represent, for the most part, singly or by combination, words and ideas. There are between forty and fifty thousand of these characters; and no one scholar ever mastered the entire number. Probably five thousand of them are sufficient to express all Christian doctrine. These arbitrary characters must be committed to memory. A little Chinese boy, when he first goes to school, commences to commit to memory these characters—to learn their shapes, their names and how to write them. After he has spent a year or two at this dry, but noisy work (for each boy repeats his characters over and over again at the top of his voice) the teacher then explains to him their meanings and combinations. These characters mean the same throughout China, but the different dialects give them different names. So difficult are these characters to master (that is, their form, pronunciation and meaning) that very few persons can read, say a chapter in the Bible, or in any other well composed book, and thoroughly understand the meaning. There is a movement now on foot, to prepare books in the colloquial, or spoken language, which can be understood even by little children. The Chinese, being a literary people, wedded to habit, and anxious to preserve a dignified style, (in which also many missionaries sympathize) may oppose this innovation—but there is no doubt it is a movement in the right direction to reach the masses with intelligent books.

The spoken dialects of China are also very

difficult, from the fact that they all possess (as well as the characters) from four to eight tones which are hard to master and apply, and without a proper use of which, very grave and ridiculous blunders are made. These tones are necessary, because the written and spoken languages of China are strictly monosyllabic; and while most missionaries know more or less of these languages, few of them are good speakers. So difficult is the Chinese in its nice shades of meaning, or in its want of theological or spiritual expression, that, to this day, though volumes have been written on either side, the term for God is yet undecided. One party holds to *Shin*, and the other to *Shangti*. I have read over all the arguments, pro and con, and it seems to me that the language has no word to express our idea of the one infinite, self-existent and holy God.

Very many of our missionaries who fail to acquire the spoken language, become very good in the books, and enter a wide field of usefulness. By the different Protestant missionaries there have been made twenty-eight translations of the Scriptures or portions of the Scriptures; thirty commentaries on portions of the Bible; two hundred and thirty-two theological works; twelve works of Sacred Biography; thirty-seven Catechisms; seventeen Prayer Books; eighteen Hymn Books; eleven educational and linguistic works; eighteen Histories; three works on Government; fourteen Geographies; eight Mathematical Works; six Astronomical Works; thirteen Medical Works; two Botanical Works; four works on Physics; two Almanacs; twelve serials, and thirteen miscellaneous works—giving a grand total of four hundred and ninety works on a wide variety of subjects—from the child's primer to such profound works as Dr. Martin's translation of Wheaton's International Law; Dr. Hobson's Medical and Physiological Works; Mr. Wylie's translations of Euclid's Geometry and Herschell's Astronomy; Mr. Edkins' translations of Wheatwell's Mechanics—besides the dictionary of Morrison, Medhurst and Williams; the Chinese Repository and Dr. Legge's Classics. The Christian Church may well point to these contributions of her teachers, besides their years of oral instruction, and challenge the whole foreign population of China—commercial, diplomatic or otherwise, to begin to match it.

I had intended to touch upon several other topics in this connection, but I must bring my paper to an end.

China has a very peculiar civilization; and the more we examine it, the more we find in it to admire, and to awaken surprise. There is first the paternal idea of government, inculcated by the Classics and by the three national religions, which has produced such long continued social order and such a wonderful political existence. China was undoubtedly a flourishing Empire when David was anointed King over Israel, or even before Cadmus brought letters into Greece; and while all the great nations which flourished and played such conspicuous parts in the drama of History two thousand years ago, have passed away, China still exists, her sceptre swaying one third of the human race.

The doctrine of obedience to the Emperor; of obedience to law; of obedience to parents and elders; of respect for moral and intellectual culture; of respect for age; of respect for industry and true democratic principles in the minor regulations of society,—all these, and more, are mighty elements of preservation; and are just such elements as Christianity welcomes and will appropriate.

Now from what has been written, no one can fail to see that China, hoary with age as she is, offers the finest field for Christian missions on the globe. Here exist, under one rule, a large portion of the human race; here agriculture is now, as it was at first, the great art of life, where the generous soil has been cultivated so skillfully for ages, that it yet remains as productive as ever; here are beheld diversified industries; social order; mental and moral tendencies of the highest type; but a civilization so crystallized, that it is hard to impress, much more to overturn. No doubt China, as a nation, has been declining for the last five hundred years—declining, not physically or mentally, but in political power and material prosperity. Her public works are neglected and her treasury bankrupt. No longer do many tributary nations pour their offerings into her coffers, since a Tartar dynasty occupies her throne and weakens the unity of her people, while her surplus products go to pay for a drug which is sapping the very life-blood of her people.

Since her last war with England and France, new energy seems to have been imparted to the Chinese government. In order to pay off her indemnity for the expenses of that war, a Customs system has been introduced, under the joint supervision of foreign and native officials. This system will be continued after the occasion for it has passed away; and will afford a fine revenue. She has also established a college at Peking for mastering Western languages and science, and a naval school at Foochow; and I have no doubt that in a few years railways and telegraphs will be introduced; but the Chinese believe in "making haste slowly." But after all, mere material progress and money-making do not always mark the highest style of civilization, afford the greatest happiness, or prove the greatest glory of a nation. Therefore it is that mere worldly men whose god is the almighty dollar, often ask, Why this waste of life and money and intellectual

power in attempting to change the moral character of the Chinese? In a human view, looking at the results so far reached, it does seem like a vast, and almost useless expenditure; but Christianity is hopeful of the future, because the promises of God are yea and amen. When commerce and travel and civilization demanded a highway across the isthmus of Darien, engineers went forward, penetrated the jungle and surveyed the route. Then came the workmen with axe and pick and shovel and wheelbarrow, and commenced to clear the way, to cut the excavations and pile up the embankments. Oftentimes the labor of weeks and months would, bodily disappear beneath the deep morass, while disease and death thinned the ranks of the humble laborers, but still, amid disappointments and trials, the work went on. By and by, the track was graded, the rails laid down, and at last, across the continent, the wealth of nations and a steady stream of human life poured, with ease, safety and rapidity, to their destination. In like manner, have Christian pioneers penetrated China; and to-day a busy company of laborers—amid much discouragement and burying here and there a companion, are laying deep and broad and firm, the foundations of "a great highway" over which the millions of the Central Flowery Land shall reach the Better Country!

V. D. COLLINS.

FLORIDA AND THE FLORIDIANS. II.

BY H. E. C.

OVER TO AUGUSTINE.

They never say Saint Augustine here, but always Augustine, with the accent on the first syllable. We will go by river and stage. An early breakfast, bright sunshine, air that you drink in like nectar, and all aboard, the Hattie bound for Picoleta, where we take stage. We pass Mandarin, in sight of Mrs. Stowe's cottage, and her beautiful little orange-grove. We pass Green Cove, just stopping long enough to visit Crystal Spring. We pass Magnolia and Hibernia, villages of five or six dwellings each, and land at Picoleta about 3 P. M. A famous place this, marked on the Atlas. It contains one house, one store-house, and one barn. I saw no more—there was no more to see. Now for a stage-ride. Here is the vehicle; and it ought to carry us safely, for see the ropes that tie it round: There is rigging enough for a man-of-war. Where is the driver? "Yer I am!" says a little fellow, dwarf or boy. "Do you drive this stage?" "I've driv it eight years." "What is your name?" "They calls me Buster." So Buster gets our trunks, ties some boards underneath his stage with the ends projecting, lashes things on with more ropes, puts us in, and away we go. This is comfort. What a drive this through the "Piney Woods," and who cares for the bumping as we strike an occasional root crossing our track. Look at the cypress trees planting their feet in the water! See the palmettos bristling their sharp points in all directions; and, underneath, whole beds of wild-flowers, all this in early February. This is more like the Florida we dreamed of.

It is nearly sunset, when we sight the light-house on Anastasia Island. The St. Sebastian is yet to be crossed before we reach the town, and there is no bridge "since the war." That war covers a multitude of sins here. One lady looking at some Northern grasses said, "Oh yes, they grew all about here before the war!" You would think that the people were rich and the country a paradise "before the war;" but the truth is that multitudes of them are in far more comfortable circumstances than ever in their lives before. We cross on a flat boat—a slow and tedious process. The sun is fast sinking, and as the crimson flushes fade away, we hear the booming sunset gun from the Fort. Buster's bugle now comes into service, and the city rings with the announcement of the arrival of the stage. Old gray ruins, darkness, glimmering lights, all pass before us as we drive rapidly up the narrow streets, under the Spanish balconies, past the military quarters, to our good boarding-house. That day's ride, and that evening arrival at Augustine have made pictures in memory never to fade.

THE OLD TOWN AND BEYOND.

Old enough surely. How strange, how un-American, how interesting. These coquina walls, these narrow streets, those gray old towers of San Marco, those melancholy dungeons underneath, under military cemetery, the old Spanish Church, and the profusion of flowers and the great orange groves, are objects on which the eye rests with a feeling of weird excitement, and to which one turns again and again. Nor must the sea-wall be forgotten; for there we must walk in this winter sunshine each day of our stay here, to drink in this delicious, bracing, healing air.

We say good-bye to Augustine with regret, but with not so deep a regret as if we were not to return again. Now for Enterprise. Stage again to Picoleta, then steamer, and as we sit down in the cabin we feel that we have spent a month in dreaming. The St. John's above Pilatka, presents points of great beauty. It shows itself in great variety, now expanding into broad quiet lakes that mirror the almost perpetual sunshine, and now suddenly narrowing till the boat can scarcely push between the banks. Here is the place for sportmen, too; and many is the shot aimed in passing, at the alligators that lie basking in the sun. Enterprise is very little excepting a hotel;—a good one with huge prices. Pilatka also is quite a favorite resort, only you want again

plenty of money, and must content yourself with such society as you can make among the boarders.

I have enjoyed my winter, the pulmonary trouble which sent me here is kindly yielding; and I have seen Florida on its good and bad side. I would like to offer some suggestions to persons who think of coming here either as permanent settlers or in pursuit of health; but my letter is already too long, and I shall want to write once more.

LETTER FROM HARRISBURG.

The winter has passed very pleasantly with our Central Penna. churches. None of them report extensive revivals. All of them have been blessed and cheered by steady and increased and healthy growth.

Among the many pleasant events of the winter, we number the visit among us of Mr. Mitchell, the Superintendent of the Freedmen's Department of Home Missions. The Assembly, we think, has been peculiarly fortunate in selecting its agent for an appeal to the churches. Mr. M. it is known is a member of the Society of Friends. He has had a thorough experience in personally conducting for some years, work among the Freedmen, and has at his command a mass of incidents and facts concerning the condition, habits, peculiarities and capabilities of the colored people, that must deeply interest all our churches to which he may have access. His address to the people of the First church, Harrisburg, though quite lengthy, seemed but brief, so deeply did he engage the attention of all. Our only regret was that he had not a Sabbath to spend with us which a larger number might have heard him. It is a somewhat peculiar position for a Quaker to fill—Superintendent of Presbyterian Missions, but Mr. Mitchell adapts himself finely to our ways, and I judge will like us as well as we like him. He has certainly secured for his cause a permanent and regular place in the contributions of the Harrisburg Presbytery.

Yesterday, was a day to be long remembered, by the churches of this city. According to a notice which appeared in most of the religious papers of Philadelphia and New York, two meetings were held and addressed by Rev. Drs. John Hall of New York, T. Stork of Philadelphia, and Rev. A. C. Roe, the Secretary of the American Christian Commission.

In calling these meetings, the pastors of the Evangelical churches of the city very heartily united, and their congregations were represented largely in them both. Both services were held in the Methodist Episcopal church, under the pastorate of Rev. C. J. Thompson. In the afternoon a large number of the Christian women of the city assembled, and were addressed by the gentlemen mentioned above. Rev. Mr. Roe both in the afternoon and evening gave a brief and lucid account of the objects and agencies of the Christian Commission. Drs. Stork and Hall were left to do the main work. The first speaker, dwelt in the afternoon upon the place and work of Woman in the Church. The address was one of deep interest.

Dr. Hall gave a most touching and impressive address on Woman's preparation and fitness for Christian work in every sphere where she is placed; first in the family, as daughter, sister, wife and mother; then in the church, in social life, and among the poor.

In the evening there was a very large congregation from all our Christian churches, and again most interesting appeals were made by both Drs. Stork and Hall.

Dr. Stork dwelt, chiefly and very effectively upon the duty of every Christian to put forth direct personal effort for the salvation of others. Dr. Hall possesses a wonderful magnetic power over his hearers. This is not due to any elegance of manner, or what is usually termed eloquence of speech. He is deeply in earnest, profoundly simple, clear, apt in illustration. He is lost behind his subject. One listens and forgets the man, save as the precious truth which he utters awakens love toward him who is so happy in its utterance.

He gave us, first his idea of the Christian life, its Godward aspect, expressed in worship, adoration, growth of grace, &c.; its outward manifestation in works of love and self-denial for human good. Then his idea of the ministry, not hired officials whose sole end is to please the fancy or taste of the people, to occupy Sabbath hours, but true Spiritual Guides, Captains of trained warriors! his idea of the Church, not a fold to be nursed, petted, fed, entertained, but a working body to be directed into Christian activities.

In chaste, beautiful and fervid language, which quickened every Christian heart; the Dr. called the disciples of Jesus to labor for their Master, first, by being thoroughly good themselves, and then, by doing good in all ways, especially to those next to them, seizing all opportunities in the family, with children; with servants; to make the power and grace of Jesus known, and all opportunities in social and business life, in the spheres of the Church activities, in the Sunday-school, Prayer-meetings, Dorcas, Visitation among the poor, &c., to speak of Jesus to others.

The results of these meetings, cannot but be happy, in quickening Christian life and making more earnest and devoted in Christian work all who were permitted to attend them.

It is likely that similar services will be held in

other of our larger central towns, such as Reading, York, and Carlisle during the spring or summer, and that country organizations will be formed to bring the same earnest appeals to the smaller towns and villages.

Our Presbytery meets in a few days, when the multifarious phases of Union question will come before us for discussion.

Yours, &c.,

March 31, 1869.

MISSIONARY STRATEGY.

DEAR BROTHER MEARS:—In my last I gave you some facts, gathered on my preaching tours, showing the intense and deplorable ignorance of the great mass of the people around us here. One fact was that of the 1,580 villages visited on my tours within the last five years, 1,400 had no school of any kind whatever, and in 865 of these villages I found no one of the permanent residents able to read our Mahratia tracts and books.

Some of the facts and figures already given, will enable you to form some idea, also, of the extent, populousness, and consequent importance of our mission field. Bear in mind the 50,000 souls here in the city of Kolapore, and the hundreds of thousands, within our reach on preaching tours, and if the field does not assume sufficient importance when considered by itself, then compare it with some other posts in the heathen world already occupied. Take the mission at the Gaboon in Western Africa. How many do our good brethren Walker and Businell reach with the Gospel in their self-denying life and labors there? As a strategic point for effecting the conquest of this world to Christ, will their position compare at all with this, at the very heart of Hindu idolatry and superstition?

And even in Southeast Africa, my good cousin among the Zulus, (now in America), writes me that a circle around his house with a radius of ten miles, encloses only about 1,000 souls, instead of the 120,000, within the same distance from our door. The entire population of the whole Sandwich Islands, on which the American Board has been lavishing its treasures and missionaries by the score for more than 40 years, is only about half this number, or about the same as we have here under our window in the city of Kolapore. Now we do not complain that 50 missionaries have been sent to the 50,000 inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands, but that only one has been sent to the millions of this field. In attempting to put down this mighty rebellion against the Lord Jesus, is it wise for the Church to expend her main force on a few small, weak, ungarrisoned outposts of the enemy and leave her Vicksburgs, Richmonds, and all her strongholds untouched, or send against them men single-handed, followed by no reinforcements or adequate supplies?

If the 1,051,140 people of the villages in which I have been enabled to preach the Gospel within the last five years, do not give a sufficient impression of the size and importance of our field, then please bear in mind that the whole *Burmaherry* collectorate, with about 1,000,000 population, lies stretched along below the Ghat, between us and the ocean, 70 miles distant; that our American brethren at Satara come not half way to us to the North, nor our London missionary brethren at Belgaum a third of the way to us on the South; and that East of us, between the parallels of Satara and Sholapur on the North and of Belgaum on the South you may travel hundreds of miles to *Hyderabad*, or even quite across to the Bay of Bengal, without finding a solitary missionary, so far as I know, till you approach the Eastern coast. Do this, and compute the millions of perishing idolaters in the region thus indicated, and you will get some idea of the immensity of our field, or rather of the immense desolations around us, utterly beyond our reach. O, when will the Church of God become in earnest to enlighten and convert these millions of idolaters and possess this land for Christ!

In the love of the Gospel, yours sincerely,
R. G. WILDER.

Kolapore, India, Jan. 24th, 1869.

TEMPERANCE ITEMS.

—Fifteen hundred women of Centre county, Pennsylvania, have petitioned the Courts to grant no more liquor licenses.

—Mr. Haynes, warden of the Massachusetts State Prison, in his valuable book, recently published, says that during the eleven years that he has been connected with the institution, twenty-one persons have been imprisoned for killing their wives, two for killing their fathers, and one for killing his mother. Of these twenty-four, all but one were not only habitual drunkards, but actually drunk when they committed the crime; and he also remarks that "these were not bad men, except when under the influence of liquor; and yet justice can make no distinction, but holds him equally guilty who commits crime under such circumstances as the one who soberly and with intellect unclouded violates the law."

—"T. L. G." in the *Evangelist* says:—"Mr. Gough was here lately and addressed a tremendous audience with tremendous power on temperance. He nearly set my hair on end with the identical scene (of a victim of *delirium tremens*) which I first heard from him twenty-four years ago! Has it ever occurred to you that Gough is the greatest dramatic performer who ever lived? Garrick spoke other people's dialogues, had the help of scene-painters and star-actors, with constant change of plays. Gough composes his own part, paints his own scenery (with the tongue), has no assistance on the stage, confines himself to the one unpopular topic of total abstinence, and yet has won as splendid triumphs both in pathos and in laughter as were ever gained by Garrick or the Kembles! He is a preacher too as well as a dramatist. Whitefield never drew more tears over the sufferings of our Saviour than I have seen to flow when Brother Gough was depicting Christ's ascent of Calvary. His speech the other evening would have fitted well in any series of Revival-meetings."