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OR

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
ORIGINAL.		EDITORIAL.	
The Old and the New Year, -	193	The Yoruba Mission, -	216
Is it my Duty to go to the Heathen? -	196	Japan as a Missionary Field, -	219
Thoughts on Missions, -	198	What is the Best for the Missionary	
More Money Wanted for Missions, -	201	Work? - - -	219
SELECTIONS.		OTHER MISSIONS.	
Different Modes of Divination among		American Board of Commissioners	
the Chinese, - - -	202	for Foreign Missions, -	220
Are we Rich, Mother? -	207	Home Proceedings, -	221
OUR MISSIONS.		Summary of the Present State of the	
SHANGHAI.—CHINA.		Missions of the American Board, -	221
Journal of Rev. A. B. Cabaniss, -	209	MISCELLANY.	
Letter of Rev. A. B. Cabaniss, -	211	Islands — Go Forward — A Father's	
Extract from a Private Letter of Bro.		Prayers — Child at Prayer — The	
Cabaniss, - - -	212	Child's Answer — The Chief Learn-	
Extract from a Letter of Dr. Burton, -	213	ing, - - -	222
LAGOS.—AFRICA.		POETRY.	
Letter from Rev. J. M. Harden, -	213	We Might Have Been, -	223
IJAYE.—AFRICA.		Trodden Flowers, -	223
Letter of Rev. A. D. Phillips, -	214	BOOK NOTICES.	
Letter of Rev. T. A. Reid, -	215	The Living Epistle—Blind Barti-	
EDITORIAL.		meus, - - -	224
The Letters from the Missionaries, -	216		

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THE OLD AND THE NEW YEAR.

It is profitable to pause, at stated periods in our pilgrimage, to retrospect the past and to contemplate the future. To induce such reflection was, doubtless, one of the benefits designed by Jehovah in the periodic festivals appointed for his ancient people. Whenever, for example, they met to partake of the Paschal lamb, they were to remember the great deliverance which God had wrought for their fathers, His constant care and protection of themselves, and the covenant of His mercies with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And unless these reflections failed to produce the effect which they were calculated to produce, their hearts would be thrilled with gratitude, and they would resolve, with increased solemnity and earnestness, to serve the Lord God Jehovah.

Wisely, however, under the Gospel dispensation, (with the exception of the constantly recurring Lord's day, the memorial of the new creation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,) we are left without sacred days. The tendency to superstition and to merely formal service, natural to depraved man, as well as the fact that Christianity was designed to be a universal religion, forbade such appointments. The worship of the Christian dispensation was to be emphatically spiritual, confined to no special periods, nor to be offered alone at consecrated places. "The hour is coming when neither in this

mountain, nor at Jerusalem, shall men worship the Father. For God is a spirit, and seeketh such to worship Him as worship in spirit and in truth." And "in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." The superstitious observances of the early Christians were rebuked by an Apostle, "Ye observe days and months and years. I am afraid of you." "Let no man, therefore, judge you in respect of the new moons of the Sabbath days." These reproofs and directions are a very pointed condemnation of the Roman Hierarchy, and such Protestant communities as follow its example, in the appointment of numerous sacred days of fasting and of feasting; and might lead us to expect just that prevalence of superstition among those communions which actually prevails.

But while the precepts and the spirit of the Gospel are thus opposed to the establishment of "sacred days," they alike invite to reflection, and there is nothing inconsistent with the greatest spirituality in appropriating special periods to such employ. Nay, such seasons of reflection and prayer, observed, not because of any supposed sacredness of the time, but to meet the wants of our nature, are highly promotive of piety.

It is reported that a distinguished commander under Frederick the Great, while yet in the vigor of manhood and the full tide of success, requested per-

mission of the King to resign his command. To the inquiry why he desired this, he replied, "Sire, there ought to be a pause between the bustle of life and the stillness of the grave. That pause I desire now to make." The incident is solemnly suggestive. The pressure of worldly avocations leaves, alas, but small opportunity for self-examination and serious reflection. We "rise up early and sit up late, and eat the bread of care." Day after day urges us on by what seem to be its indispensable engagements. The shades of night find us either still pressed by business, or worn down with fatigue. The rest of Lord's day—if indeed that is allowed to be a day of rest, scarcely suffices to restore the prostrated energies of body and of mind. And thus we live on, a tread-mill life, or it may be, like one sailing over a stormy sea, until we wear out, or are suddenly wrecked. We hardly know who, or what we are. Professing the name of Christ, cherishing some hope of salvation, we but imperfectly realize the character, the duties, the hopes of the Christian. Restless, if we are indeed Christians, we can but be. We know that we are not living as we ought to live. We hope to do better—a hope which has so often deceived us that now we hardly dare to cherish it at all. What shall we do? Shall we, as too often before, utter a few regrets, make some feeble, ineffectual efforts to free ourselves from the bondage of the world—and then go forth soon to be as much engrossed as ever, with the business and the cares of life? Rather let us pause. Let us take time to consider—to resolve to strengthen our hearts by prayer and meditation. Let us look at the past and the future with a Christian's eye, and resolve, with a Christian's heart, as to the course we shall pursue.

The past. It is a long, it may be, a dreary road. To retrace the whole were too much for our feebleness—too much for our sinking hearts. It is a journey

of years. Our flagging feet would fail ere we reached the end. Let us then shorten the distance. Let us go back over the past year—the year 1858, which has but just closed.

How did we commence the year? Full of life and hope, it may be, and with a solemn purpose to consecrate it more to the service of Christ than any previous year had been. This was well. God's mercies made glad our hearts, His grace cheered our spirits, and it was meet that we should bring such a "thank offering" before him. But have we continued the oblation? His mercies have still followed us. Our health has been good, our families have been preserved, our business has prospered. Some slight exceptions there may be—some sickness—some blighted hopes; some disastrous ventures, but still may we say, "Goodness and mercy have followed us." But, alas! how have we fulfilled our vows of consecration! We are conscious, to day, that we have grown more worldly-minded with the increasing prosperity which has attended us. The closet has been neglected for the counting-house, the Bible for the prices current. The prayer-meeting for the enjoyment of rest to invigorate for business, or to catch a moment for mere carnal pleasure, and the cause of Christ and the claims of charity for the purpose of adding to our hoards or increasing our expenditures. And are we Christians? We who have thus profaned our own vows, who have thus perverted our blessings, who have so worshiped and served the world?

How did we commence the year? Memory recurs to a season like the present. There is the "closet" to which we retired—yonder still lingers the penitential tear that fell from our eye as we thought upon the past and felt how unfaithful and ungrateful we had been. There it was, as humbly bowed in prayer, we promised our abused, but merciful Lord, that, if permitted to live

through another year we would seek to "redeem the time" for holy purposes. "Our soul hath it still in remembrance and is humbled within us." We were sincere. We thought we would do it. And for a time we "did run well." Morning found us on our knees—and night witnessed the renewal of our vows. Sweet to us were the privileges of the sanctuary. To labor and to give for the Redeemer's cause was our delight. But, ah, a few short months and our prayers were less fervent—then they were sometimes omitted—crowded out by the claims of business or pleasure. The services of the sanctuary were jejune and unrefreshing. We had no time for labor and no money to spare for religious purposes. Occasionally our consciences have tormented us—we have confessed and promised amendment, but here we are now, with "scarce a peg to hang a hope upon."

How did we commence the year? Just about as we have ended it, with with no special feeling of repentance or gratitude—no peculiar conviction of obligation, or marked purpose of devotion or of action. We are Christians—are we not? We related our experience to a church, and by their vote were admitted to baptism. Our name is on the church book, and no one can accuse us of any immorality. We pay our church rates—attend meeting on Lord's day, and at other times if it is convenient. We have to devote ourselves with great industry to our business. Our family must be provided for, and we must try to "lay by something for a rainy day." We don't think there is much cause for concern. God will take care of the souls of his people. He has promised to do so and we can trust him. The truth is, we don't think much about it. How should we—we have so many other things to think of. Thus we have passed the year.

But other answers are given to this question, answers to which we rejoice

to turn. Some can say, with truth and heart-felt gratitude: We have endeavoured to live to Christ. Sensible are we of many, very many failures, but it has been our habitual aim to live for Christ. Many errors and sins we have to lament, but we have sought to "mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to live godly and soberly and righteously." And, "by the grace of God, we are what we are." Precious seasons of heavenly joy, mingled, it is true, with occasions of regret, have been our portion through the year, and though we have failed to accomplish all, we desired we thank God that we have been permitted to do something for His glory.

It may be, that to some of our readers the year just passed has been one of peculiar trial. Sickness—the loss of friends—the loss of property, or other causes, may have thrown a gloom over their pathway. They have passed through deep waters. The waves have gone over them. How have they borne these afflictions? What effect have they wrought in their spiritual condition? It is hard to bear the rod. But how often does the child of God have to say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Is it so with those whom I address? Do they find themselves more humble, more trustful, more full of that "good hope through grace," which is the consolation of all the sorrows of earth?

But the old year is gone. The new year has just come. How shall we spend it? Dear readers, let the answer to this question be solemnly pondered and faithfully spoken. If God permits us to live through another year, we may, through grace, make great advances in the divine life, and do much good. But, if these results are to be secured, we must resolve firmly, and act promptly and perseveringly. Painful regrets for the past will do us no good unless they lead to a wiser improvement of the future. Good—M.

will not profit us, unless they are resolutely carried into execution. Occasional and interrupted efforts will accomplish but little. Let us resolve that we will be more regular and constant in prayer, the study of God's Word and devout meditation than we have ever been; that we will be constant and punctual in our attendance upon the house of God; that we will vigilantly guard against the encroachments of business and pleasure; that we will seek, every day, for opportunities of doing good to others; and that we will manage all our affairs, and dispose of all our gains as the "stewards of the manifold mercies of God."

Let us set about the execution of these resolves at once, and with a constant reliance upon divine grace, "persevere unto the end." There is no time to lose. The wings of time, wide-spread, are bearing us rapidly onward, are bearing us rapidly onward. Soon another year of life's journey will be over. Perhaps it may be *our last year*. No chance then to rectify mistakes; to attempt, by increased diligence, to atone for past neglect. No, no. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor labor, in the grave whither thou goest." P.

IS IT MY DUTY TO GO TO THE HEATHEN?

This question presents itself to the minds of very many of those who devote themselves to the work of the ministry, though it receives an affirmative response in so few instances. It is difficult, if not impossible, to believe that only those who actually become missionaries in the foreign field ought to answer thus. The great disproportion between the number of laborers at home and abroad, and the utter impossibility, without a large increase of missionaries, of meeting the constantly increasing demands for missionary labor, forbid such a conclusion.

Why, then, do not others, who ought to go, come to the determination to give themselves to this work?

We might answer, generally, it is owing to that low state of piety, and want of a sense of personal responsibility, which prevent many from entering the ministry here at home, and which are manifested in the worldly conformity and indifference of the members of our churches. But there are special reasons in this case, some of which we shall now mention.

1st. There is a wrong standard of judgment upon the subject. It is taken for granted that no one ought to go on a mission to the heathen, without an *overpowering* conviction that it is his duty to do it. He may have his attention called to the subject; he may be impressed with the wants of the heathen, he may understand the "commission" of the Saviour as demanding the universal diffusion of the gospel; but, if by any means he can repress a feeling of personal obligation, if he can turn away his ears from hearing the cry of the destitute, and his eyes from beholding their misery, why, let him do it, and he may safely stay at home.

Now, in what Bible is this theology taught? Sure we are there is nothing in the Word of God to countenance such a conclusion. If any man will let the commission of the Redeemer, and the example of the Apostles speak, they will teach him, that so far from the question, "Shall I go forth?" being one difficult to decide, that other question, "May I stay at home?" is the one environed with difficulty. "Go ye into all the world," is the language of the Saviour, and the example of the Apostles is in harmony with it. We believe that a just view of this subject, connected with the prevalence of humble, heart-felt piety, would make it a harder matter for one, possessed of the necessary qualifications, to decide to settle down in the midst of churches and pastors, and other means of evan-

gelization, than to go forth to the destitute of our own land, or the still more destitute of heathen lands.

2nd. There is so little of the spirit of the Gospel among the brotherhood, that they are unwilling that their friends, or those whom they regard as promising great usefulness shall go out as missionaries. Hence it not unfrequently happens, that those whose minds are seriously turned to this subject, are dissuaded from devoting themselves to missionary life. There are not a few honorable exceptions to the application of this remark—Christians who would encourage any—their own children even—whom they found entertaining convictions of duty on the subject. But the remark is applicable to a still larger number. We have rarely conversed with one who has indicated any concern with reference to his personal duty in this respect, who has not been dissuaded from giving himself to the work. Now, such persuasions harmonize with the natural feelings. No one wishes to leave parents and kindred, and friends, and all the prospects of pleasure and profit that open before him here, to go to an unhealthy and uninviting land, where he must dwell in the midst of heathen degradation, to toil on, unrequited, unthanked, through a life of suffering, ending in a premature grave. Hence it becomes easy to stifle conviction, and to compromise with conscience by the promise of laboring *here* to promote the cause—a promise too often forgotten, or but illy complied with.

3rd. Nearly all that is said about the need of ministers, by our brethren generally—and they say far too little about it—has reference to the wants of our own country. They can all, upon occasion, plead the destitution in *our own* association, *our State*, *our country*, but it is left, to a very great extent, to the secretaries alone to plead the cause of the heathen. This they attempt to do, but then, *it is their business!* and

besides, they can rarely know that a young man is thinking seriously of the claims of the foreign field until his mind is made up. There is a reluctance to communicate with them, lest it should be taken as a committal. Thus, while one is discussing the question, every influence, adverse to a favourable decision, is brought to bear, with but little to counterbalance them. Is it to be wondered that the decision is to stay at home?

But, my young brother, this question claims an honest decision at your hands. You cannot evade it without guilt. You cannot answer it wrongly without criminality, for *you have the means of a right decision at command*. You have the "Word of the Lord" in your hands. You either know, or you may easily acquaint yourself with the condition and wants of our missions, and the qualifications needed for the work. For any information you need upon these points you have only to write to the Secretaries, and they will gladly furnish you with it. Or it may be, that you are living near some right-minded, intelligent brother, with whom you can confer. You have access to Him who has directed, by His Apostle, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God." Will you earnestly, honestly, meet the question, Should not I go to the heathen? They are perishing for lack of knowledge. God, in His providence, has opened a wide door. China and Africa need their hundreds. Brazil—New Mexico—Japan—where shall we stop—are in need of the Gospel. Shall we send it to them? *Will you go and carry it?* Say not nay, for then, alas, who shall go?

We promise you not ease or worldly enjoyment or honor. We promise not health or long life—but we do promise, in the name of our master, "the loving kindness of the Lord, which is better than life," if you are found in the path of duty.

M.

THOUGHTS ON MISSIONS.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IN MISSIONS.

"He that hath not the spirit of Christ," says the apostle, "is none of his." What is the spirit of Christ? To go with the magi, and adore the holy infant in Bethlehem, is not the spirit of Christ. Nor is it that, that leads us to enter the temple, and listen to the words of the youth of twelve years, as he utters words of mighty import to the doctors of the law. We may follow the Son of Man in his incessant and lonely journeys over the barren mountains, and through arid wastes; we may sympathize with him in his pains and sorrows, and yet the spirit of Christ may not be in us. We may gaze with awe and wonder, as his gracious words cause the unwilling ear to hear his accents of mercy; and the blind eyes to look with rapture upon his sweet and benignant countenance; we may behold the withered hand stretch forth, and the loathsome disease of the leper disappear. Nay, we may see "the only son of his mother" rise from his bier, or he whom the Lord loved, come from the charnel-house, obedient to the divine mandate; and, as we witness his entry into Jerusalem, may shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosannah in the highest!" and yet our hearts may be strangers to the love of Christ.

The love of Christ! Ah! who discerns it? who possesses it? Says the apostle: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love, though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." It is not the spirit of Christ that leads the Pharisee to utter his lifeless prayers at the corner of the streets, or in the chief seats of the synagogues. Nor is it that which moves the worldly-minded professor to bestow his goods for the decoration of temples

made with hands, or for the endowment of colleges, where the warm-hearted may be received, and nourished, and prepared for deeds far more noble than those which have graced the lives of warriors and statesmen. No! all these objects and all these acts may be desired and performed, and yet the heart may be unsanctified, and in open rebellion against God. But *that* is the spirit of Christ which touched the heart of "Enoch, the seventh from Adam," when he prophesied, saying, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed." It was the spirit of Christ that impelled Noah, for the space of an hundred and twenty years, to preach righteousness, that the antediluvian world might escape the threatened judgment of Jehovah. It was in the fullness of this divine and benevolent spirit, that the father of the faithful,—the friend of God,—plead with his Maker, as a man pleads with his fellow, for the imbruted inhabitants of Sodom: "Oh, let not the Lord be angry," entreated the holy man, "and I will speak: Peradventure ten shall be found there." Ten righteous souls were not found, and the cities of the plain received the outpouring of God's wrath.

That was the spirit of Christ which led Judah, in the nobleness of his heart, to say to his unknown brother, "Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad, a bondman to my lord, and let the lad go up with my brethren." It was to exemplify the spirit of missions that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and to evince their love for the holy cause, they hesitated not to endure "cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the

sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented."

That also was the spirit of Christ, as it was the very essence of the gospel and of missions, that prompted St. Paul to utter the cherished wishes of his heart, startling from their fervid and burning intensity: "I say the truth in Christ; I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,—for I could wish myself accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Therefore he ceased not day nor night to warn men with tears.

THE DUTIES OF PASTORS.

If it be the duty of the membership to do all in their power to place the means of salvation within the reach of those who are destitute, it can be no less the duty of ministers to labour to the same end. It would be an easy task to show how much the success of the Christian minister among his flock is promoted by his keeping alive the love of the missionary cause. Wherever, and among whatever people, a deep sympathy exists for those destitute of God's word, and a consequent generous and systematic plan is observed for its manifestation, there will be found the highest state of prosperity as a church, and the greatest amount of individual Christian enjoyment. The faithful minister feels the worth of souls, and labours with all the energies of mind and body, to gather them into the fold of the Good Shepherd. His flock also sympathize with him in his desires and efforts; and while they bestow much care and attention around them, they look abroad on the fields already white with the harvest, and pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Says the apostle: "Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." Every truly-called minister of the cross feels

in some measure this sentiment, so vividly presented by the apostle, in the language above quoted; but few, it is feared, have it so deeply engraven on their hearts, as to show that they fully comprehend the tremendous consequences resulting from an ignorance of the gospel. How few of those who stand as watchmen on the walls of beleaguered Zion, or keep their silent vigils in the cold and cheerless plain, watching like shepherds over their helpless flocks, call to mind other folds and other flocks, exposed to beasts of prey, and wandering over the desert without a shepherd or shelter. How few who remember, as they look around upon their own happy charge and behold the rays of light that shine forth in their midst, that there are others from whom the "candlestick" has long since been removed.

It therefore becomes a most solemn consideration, that should engage the mind and heart of every servant of God, how he may properly magnify his office, and fulfil the duties of his high and holy calling. Every breeze that is wafted over the mighty deep speaks of wretchedness, and utters in despairing tones, "Come over and help us." And while the watchman treads his beaten track, and hears the call from some traveller amid the sleeping city,—“Watchman, what of the night?” He returns, “The morning cometh;” and thinks not of the night, nor of the dark shadows that enclose the neglected heathen. How few of those who watch for souls appear to realize the proper extent of their high calling. Not within a narrow space—the limits of a village, or city, or continent, are sympathies and labours to be confined, but wide as the world, as universal as the love of their Master, who said, “Go ye into ALL THE WORLD, and preach the gospel to EVERY NATION.”

The benighted African, the degraded Hindoo, the besotted Turk—all, all have souls to be saved or lost. The

eye of God looks with as strong a desire upon them, as upon the more favoured of his creatures. They with ourselves claim filial affinity to the first pair, and with us share the consequences of their fall. With outstretched arms they beckon us, who have what once they possessed, and cry in anguish, "We be heathen! Help, or we perish!"

It was in response to this call, which thrilled through every fibre of their being, that Carey, Marshman, Ward, Judson, Newell and Mills, went forth, even as HE went forth, to save the lost. They felt that to them were addressed the words of the prophet: "O, son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked of his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; *but his blood will I require at thine hand.*"

Says the apostle to Timothy: "I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom; preach the word,"—that word which is a "lamp to the feet and a light to the path," and which is able to make its believers wise unto salvation; "Preach the word;" and because he himself had so faithfully done it, he trusted to receive the crown of righteousness which the Lord had promised to him and to all that loved his appearing. Says the Saviour: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Until the gospel shall be preached to every creature, the command of the Redeemer will not have been obeyed; nor will the ransomed of the Lord return to Zion; neither will a nation be born in a day, nor the lion lie down with the lamb. Until that day arrives, the wilderness

will not blossom as the rose, nor will the voice of weeping cease to be heard. In view of these facts, the souls under the altar, the captives in the prison-house of the universal and restless foe of our race, and the groaning creation, will continue to repeat, "Preach the gospel to every creature;" and the waiting Bride, as she decks herself in white apparel, will cease not to exclaim, "Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?"

Who does not wish to behold the day when the glorious throng of God's elect shall be complete? What Christian heart is there that does not long for the time when the martyr-cry, "How long, O Lord?" shall cease, and in its stead be sung, "Arise, shine; for the light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" Who that has followed the Lord does not wish for the "regeneration," when the "ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads?" Who that loves the Saviour does not long for "the set time to favour Zion,"—the time when she shall "travail and bring forth her children," and feel ready to exclaim, with heart and tongue, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, 'Thy God reigneth?' Then will the Lord rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in his people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

Now, it is the duty of pastors, themselves, to labour and bring their churches to labour, with persevering diligence and self-denying liberality for

this blessed consummation. To neglect to do so is inconsistent with the feelings which prompt every true minister of Christ, violative of their solemn obligations as the Lord's ambassadors to a fallen world, and subversive of the best interests of the churches under their charge.

KAPPA.

MORE MONEY WANTED FOR MISSIONS.

This is a want but little understood among the churches, but one painfully felt by our Missionary Boards and their Secretaries. These brethren, upon whom we have imposed the responsibility of conducting the grand enterprise of Christian missions, admit, in all its fullness the, importance of faith and of prayer, of enlarged views and of thorough consecration, but none of these can supply the place of *money*.—No proof is so readily appreciated by them, as "*material*" proof. If we too would appreciate the force of this "*material aid*," we should feel for awhile the weight of their solicitude and responsibility. Could we be transported from our narrow quiet spheres, and seated for a few hours on the "Board meeting," around the table piled up with petitions from the four quarters of the globe, begging with thousands of voices for the bread of life,—could we look into the anxious hearts of those brethren, as they turn from the cries of pressing need coming from missionaries now in the field, to an empty treasury and despairingly ask one another, "brethren, what can be done?" then we might realize more fully that *money* is one great want of the mission cause.

Suppose for instance, that the annual contributions of the churches have been gathered in, the travelling agents have rendered their final reports, the receipts from special appeals and every other source have been added to the account, and yet there is a woeful deficit.

What is to be done now? The day of miracles is passed, and to expect the work to go on without *money*, would be *presumption*, rather than *faith*. Yet these brethren cannot, dare not shrink from the responsibility they have assumed. Something *must* be done, and done at once. What *can* they do in such an emergency as this? Why, remembering that the earth is "the Lord's and the fullness thereof," that all the wealth now in the hands of God's people has been sacredly consecrated to his service, they can fall back upon the great conscience of the churches, and ask God to open their hearts and their purses. And is this *all* that can be done? By no means. We, the pastors and people, may greatly aid in this matter. Instead of croaking about superfluous and expensive machinery, and oft repeated appeals,—instead of turning the cold shoulder to our self-sacrificing agents, we should at all times give them a hearty *welcome*,—not of kindness and fair speeches only, but of *money*. This is the sort of *welcome* they appreciate. Ah, it is the test and the measure by which they will try our professions. The test is of divine ordainment. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

As to the comparative merits of the different plans of raising money for benevolent and missionary purposes, the systematic plan of annual contributions, now in use with many of the churches has many decided advantages over all others. It is scriptural in its spirit and general features. It is uniform and self-perpetuating. But this plan is only partially adopted by the churches, and is by no means perfect in its arrangements and operations. While this is the case, the agency system can not be dispensed with. And even under the most matured and general plan of systematic contributions, unforeseen emergencies would spring up, when special efforts would become an imperative necessity. No matter how great, or

how promising the harvest may be, the Board ought not, will not make appointments beyond the supposed ability and willingness of the churches to meet. But if in spite of the utmost avarice, economy and industry a special call upon the brethren and churches become necessary, instead of permitting it to fall with crushing weight upon a few liberal souls, let the amount needed be judiciously distributed among all, then the burden would be light to each one. In a case of that kind, if all the churches were under the operations of a thorough systematic plan, how easily could the Board, or the Treasurer, take the list of churches, and apportion the amount required among them, according to their ability, and forward the amount to each to be collected and remitted without the expense of a collecting agent.

Until such a general plan can be brought into successful operation, we must be content with the present *mixed* system, and leave the matter in a great degree, with the Board and its officers. Their position compels them to look at the subject in all its bearings, and their piety and good sense will lead them to adopt the best means which the wants of the heathen on the one hand, and the available resources of the churches on the other hand will permit. Relying upon their fidelity and sound judgment, we ought to give them the money they need to meet the tremendous responsibility imposed upon them, a responsibility which we are bound to share with them by the most solemn vows and obligations to God, and to our fellow beings. These brethren must have *money*. What can they do without *money*? We have the Lord's money on loan, and ought to return it when it is needed, especially when it is demanded by the owner. We ought to treat his collectors with the greatest respect.

If there be a class of Christ's servants, who, next to the foreign missionary, is entitled to the sympathy and

coöperation of all God's people, it is our secretaries and travelling agents, who, at great sacrifice and self denial, go from association to association, and from church to church, to beg from the Lord's people, the Lord's *money*, to carry on the Lord's work. I repeat, it is *money*, the *Lord's money* we want, to carry forward the missionary enterprise.

R. J.

SELECTIONS.

DIFFERENT MODES OF DIVINATION AMONG THE CHINESE.

In a semi-civilized and superstitious nation like the Chinese, possessed of an ancient and voluminous literature, the existence of many theories and arts for unlocking the secrets of futurity, might naturally be expected. From the earliest period of Chinese history to the present time, it has been customary to resort to augury in determining important events and movements either of a public or private character. Formerly, divination was practised by the examination of the shell of the tortoise. The abstruse character of some of these mystic arts, which are not understood even by those who practise them, and which owe much of their influence to the prestige of antiquity, may be in a manner described, but cannot be satisfactorily explained.

In the practice of divination, great use is made of the "Eight Diagrams," invented by the Emperor Fuh-hi, probably more than three thousand years before Christ. About eleven centuries before Christ, Wan-wang, the Literary Prince, and his son Chow-kung developed these eight diagrams into sixty-four attaching to them additional ideas and explanations. Confucius, about five hundred years before Christ, collected and perpetuated these relics of the past in the Yih-king, or "Book Changes," which is still one of the most venerated of the ancient Chinese

classics. These diagrams are nothing but arbitrary signs, the original meaning of which cannot be satisfactorily determined. They are supposed to embody the principles by which the universe was evolved out of the chaotic matter; and which, by necessary and unchanging laws, determine all the changes which take place in nature. Those who profess to be able to disclose future events, generally rest their claim upon public credulity, on some new views gained of this book of mysteries, or on their familiarity with books written by others in explanation of it. It is believed that the mines of wisdom hid in these diagrams have never been fully explored; and that great advantages will accrue to those who have the penetration to find the key to their contents. It is a common remark among the Chinese: "If foreigners, with all their skill and ingenuity, possess themselves of the Yih-king, all the world will become subject to them." It is also said that Heaven will not permit the Yih-king to be taken out of the empire; and that when the attempt to export it has been made, vessels bearing it across the sea have encountered storms and tempests until it has been thrown overboard.

In the latter part of the Chau dynasty, Kwei kuh-sien-sz applied the Yih-king to the use of soothsaying, and is regarded as the father of augurers; though no book has come down to the present from him. During the present and preceding dynasties, many books have been written on this subject; among the most noted of which is the *Poh shi ching tsung*, "Source of True Divination," written in the forty-eighth year of the emperor Kang-hi. This work consists of six volumes, and contains a minute and detailed system of elaborated nonsense, such as it would be difficult to find a parallel to in any language. The preface will perhaps give as clear an idea of its contents as could be otherwise obtained, and forc-

bly reminds one of the manner in which quacks and empirics, in other lands, decry the nostrums of others, while they extol their own. It contains also a true and lively picture of the evils which the system it advocates entails upon the people. The following is a translation of the greater part of it.

DIVINATION BY THE INVOCATION OF THE GODS.

"The secret of augury consists in communication with the gods. Its object is to determine good and evil fortune; to settle doubt and anxiety; to discriminate between *yin* and *yang* in the different forms of diagrams. The interpretation of the transformations is deep and mysterious. The theory of this science is most intricate; the practice of it most important. The sacred classic says, 'that which is true gives indications of the future:' therefore, if a person seeking a response is not sincere, he cannot move the gods; if the interpreter of the response is careless and inconsiderate in his divinations, they will not be fulfilled. These two remarks are emphatically true and important. It is common to see persons seek a response when occasion requires, while sincerity is entirely forgotten. When from intoxication and feasting, or licentious pleasures, they proceed to invoke the assistance of the gods, what infatuation to suppose that their prayers will move them! Besides, the wealthy or honorable, affecting a contempt for the art of soothsaying, either look to a friend, or send a servant to ask a response in their stead, without showing their zeal and earnestness by presenting themselves in person. Hence, when no response is given, or the interpretation is not verified, they lay the blame at the door of the augurer, forgetting that the failure is due to their want of sincerity. This is the fault of the one seeking the response. It is the great fault of augurers, that, from a desire of gain, they use the art of divination as

a trap to ensnare the people. For instance, in case of sickness, (than which nothing can be more important,) some, regardless of the principles of rectitude, have a private understanding with Buddhist priests, and nuns, and Tauists,* by which they are to share in their gains; thus forgetting augury in their lust after money. They determine whether to exact a greater or less amount from the applicant, by observing his wealth or poverty. They recklessly prescribe that a certain number of chapters of prayer shall be repeated at some Buddhist or Tauist temple; or that a certain number of days shall be spent in chanting over a sacred book in a nunnery. The applicant, overcome by anxiety, readily assents to anything. If the individual be wealthy, it matters little; if he be poor, he may be led to pawn his clothes, contract debts, and squander his property; and may thus be reduced to the severest straits and necessities, while he indulges the hope that the sick person will be restored. But, in fact, before the prayers are finished the sick person dies; while the sacred book is being read, the sufferer is no more. These injuries result from alliances with Buddhists, and Tauists. Again, inexperienced physicians, unskilled in their profession, apply for assistance in gaining practice, and the augurer in his prayers and temptations, indicates clearly where this physician is to be found, thus furnishing him with employment. They do not consider that while the augurer secures in a year a little gain, the sick man, in an unsuspecting moment, meets death by the hand of his attendant. This is the sin of forming an alliance with physicians. These two evils exist everywhere, and are the

plague of every city. I have suspended my sign in front of the office of the military magistrate. If the above classes of men come to tempt me, I take an oath to reject all their proffers, and will in every case carefully divine according to the diagrams, and no doubt my prognostications will prove true."

DIVINATION BY DIAGRAMS.

In every place of any considerable size, fortune-tellers of this class are numerous. They are not unfrequently blind, and, when so, have an assistant. The manner of their divination is as follows. When a person wishing a response presents himself, a small box containing three copper cash, is handed to him, which he takes very reverently in both hands, and with which he describes a circle around incense sticks, kept continually burning before paintings of the patrons of the art of divination. After having made his prostrations before the paintings, he proceeds in the same reverent manner to the door, and then invokes the aid of Heaven, in a form somewhat like the following: "To-day, I, [—], reading near the temple [—], on account of sickness in my family, (or for some other cause, as the case may be,) present myself to obtain a true response respecting this matter. Let me know the event, whether it be favorable or the contrary." This ceremony being performed, the applicant places the box with cash in the hands of the diviner, who also, after asking a few questions, waves it with even greater solemnity over the table of incense. He then repeats a form of prayer, generally addressed to the patrons of the mystic art. The form prescribed in the book before referred to, is the following: "Though heaven has no voice, when addressed, there is a response; the gods are living, and when invoked, are near. A man is now present who is harassed with mental anxiety; and not knowing whether his affairs will prove prosper-

* The augurer, as a return for directing the applicant to worship in a particular temple, is permitted to share the money paid to the priests of that temple.

ous or adverse, he is unable to solve his doubts and perplexities. We can only look to the gods, spirits, to instruct us as to what is or is not to take place." This done, the box is shaken, and the cash are cast upon the table three times in succession. The upper surfaces of the coins are observed each time, and each combination of the surfaces of these three cash being represented by an arbitrary sign, the three signs combined will coincide with one of the eight degrees. After another prayer, the cash are again cast three times, and the different combinations together with the previous results, will coincide with and point out one of the sixty-four diagrams. One of these having been in this way determined, the next question is how to interpret it. Three distinct considerations combine to fix this interpretation, and give an endless meaning to each diagram. These are the particular objects sought in the divination; the meaning or power of the two characters designating the current month; and the meaning of the two characters designating the day. The response that is sought may have reference to matters of business; the course of procedure to be adopted in a case of sickness; or the feasibility of any plan which suggests itself in any emergency. The greater part of the book referred to is occupied with minute instructions to aid in the right interpretation of the diagrams in all supposable cases and circumstances. The diviner, being a close observer of human nature, is influenced in a great measure in his interpretations by what he has been able to learn through shrewd and indirect interrogations respecting the character and circumstances of the applicant. The diagram with its explanation is written out and handed to the inquirer, who sometimes has it interpreted a second time in another place. A larger or smaller sum is paid to these fortune-tellers, according to the circumstances of the

applicant, and the importance of the matter in hand. As has been before intimated, no small part of the gains of those who engage in this occupation, is obtained by making business for priests and physicians, for doing which they receive a consideration from them.

In the practice of divination above described, called *ki-ko*, the object is to determine the issue of any present difficulty or emergency. In less urgent cases, when a person is in doubt with reference to his business affairs, or has a curiosity to know the general fortunes of his future life, another method of anticipating the future is resorted to, called *swan-ming*, "reckon the life." In *ki-ko* the correctness of the divination is supposed to be due, not only to the right interpretation of the mysterious and unchanging principles of the diagrams, but to the indications of the gods, whose assistance is regarded most important. In *swan-ming*, a knowledge of the future is supposed to be obtained by the use of hidden arts alone; the special assistance of the gods not being sought.

DIVINATION BY MEANS OF EIGHT CHARACTERS.

The most common mode of *swan-ming*, is that of "examining the eight characters," or, as it is sometimes called, *pi-ming-tsz*, "examining the paper of life." In describing this mode of divination, it will be necessary first to refer to the Chinese mode of reckoning time. The sexagenary cycle, which gives names to years, months, days, and hours, is represented by a combination of two sets of characters, numbering ten and twelve respectively; the former being regarded as connected with heaven or the *yang* principle, and the latter with earth or the *yin* principle. The first ten names of the cycle, are the union of the ten characters referred to, with the first ten of the twelve in regular order; each cycle being represented by two characters. In forming the second ten combi-

nations, the eleventh of the twelve characters is united with the first of the ten, and so on; so that in the sixty combinations, each of the twelve characters is used five times, and each of the ten six times. Representations for the different numbers of the cycle being thus formed of two characters each, the combinations or names are applied to designate sixty successive years, sixty successive months, sixty successive days, and sixty successive hours; these sixty names revolving in perpetual cycles, in the greater and lesser divisions of time. Each one of these two sets of characters, is supposed to have a certain mysterious connection with one or other of what are regarded as "the five elements," viz: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth.

With these preliminary observations, we may get some idea of the manner in which pi-ming tsz is practised. A person presents himself before the diviner, to ask the general question, whether the present period of his life is auspicious or otherwise, with special reference to the prosecution of business, change of residence, attending the examinations, &c. The applicant is first required to state the year, month, day, and hour of his birth. The couplett of characters representing each of these four divisions of time, present together the "eight characters," which form the basis of the calculation. The eight characters of my Chinese teacher may serve as an example. The most important or leading character is always the former of the two representing the day of birth. The character happens to be, in the present instance, connected with the element *wood* or *tree*, therefore the life of the individual in question has a mystical connection with a tree. The day of birth occurs in one of the autumn months; a time unfavourable to the growth and luxuriance of vegetation; hence, without some special reason to the contrary, the general

fact is arrived at, that the individual will be weak and delicate. In addition to this, one of the characters representing the month, and one of those representing the hour, are connected with metal: metal cuts wood; therefore the condition of the individual is still more precarious. Two of the other characters are connected with earth, which produces metal, and this makes the case of the individual even more deplorable. But, on the other hand, one of the characters is connected with water, which contributes to the growth of wood. This happy circumstance, together with others less easy of explanation, serves to counteract to some extent adverse influences. In every case, the divination consists in striking the balance between good and evil influences, in doing which there is a wide scope for the play of individual fancies. Those who practice this art are astute observers of character; and the circumstance and appearance of the applicant, together with information derived by subtle questions, have much to do in each case in determining the nature of the response. The eight characters not only form the basis of deciding the fortunes of an individual at the time when the divination is sought, but for any number of years in the future. The fortunes of any subsequent year are supposed to be decided by the question, whether the characters representing that year have a propitious or unpropitious connection with the leading character of a man's life. Thus, it is often remarked that such and such years will be difficult to pass. The minute details of this kind of soothsaying, are presented in a work of four volumes, entitled "Tsz-ping-yuen-hai."—*J. L. Nevius, in Home and Foreign Record.*

Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed.

ARE WE RICH, MOTHER?

"Mother, are we rich?"

"Yes, darling, very rich," answered Mrs. Lawrence quietly, as she leaned forward towards the window, in the deepening twilight, to thread her needle once more, for the last stitch in the garment she was completing. There was something in her tone which made little Anna turn and look earnestly at her. There had been, for the past half hour, an unbroken silence; during which the child had been sitting in a musing attitude, gazing earnestly into the glowing fire. The muffled sound of the embers falling from the grate, mingling with the low murmur of the wind without, as it shook off the still-falling snow from the branches of the trees, only deepened her reverie. Now, her question revealed the subject on which she had been pondering.

"Do you really mean so, mother?—*Are we very rich?*"

"Yes, my child. It is true; we are rich. Perhaps not in the sense in which you understand the word; but why does my little Anna ask the question? Has she not all that she can reasonably desire?"

"Yes, mamma, surely." And Anna turned and surveyed the cosy little parlor, with its blazing fire; the old-fashioned easy-chair, with its worsted-plaid covering, in which, as she had been told, "grandmamma" used to sit, in her double-ruffled cap and spectacles, reading with clasped hands, reverently, the Bible on her knee; the large old clock, which had stood for fifty years in its present position, and told out the hours now with the same regularity and precision as when, in its youthful days, it was placed there; the side-board, with its ornamental brass, polished to the highest lustre; the old mirror, with its shining black frame, which grandpapa used to tell his eldest grandchild, as she sat upon his knee, had been bought with Continental money, and cost ten thousand dollars; the old Turkey carpet, now

faded and threadbare, but neat as household care could make it—all these, with the little centre-table, covered with its bright crimson cloth, told her, that at least they were rich in comfort. But she was thoughtful still.

"Why did you ask the question, my child?"

"Because, mamma, we had a new scholar to-day at school. She told me that her father was very rich, and asked me if my mother was. I told her that I did not know, and she thought *that* strange. The girls said that she was proud. Do you think that people ought to be proud of riches, mamma?"

"No, my child, unless they have obtained them by their own industry, and they have made them the means of substantial good to themselves, or others. Even then *pride* is not the proper feeling. It should be *gratitude* to Him who has given us the ability to acquire, and the wisdom to use our acquisitions aright."

By this time, the twilight had yielded to darkness. Mrs. Lawrence laid aside her work, and stood for some minutes at the window, looking out pensively upon the starless night and the increasing storm. "God pity the poor! God pity the homeless!" she prayed in the depths of her heart; and then, with deep thankfulness for her own share of earthly comfort, she let fall the curtains and turned to the genial heart-cheering warmth of her own fireside. Seating herself in the old time-honored arm-chair, she took her little girl of ten years upon her knee,

The darkness grew denser without, and the fire glowed more and more cheerfully within; occasionally, it sent up a ruddy gleam that lighted up the walls, and the few old pictures that hung there, among them one dearer than all, that seemed to smile protection upon the widow and the fatherless child.

"My darling, I will answer your question now more fully. I said truly,

that we are rich; not in money, or in lands, but in something far better. We are rich in the proofs of God's love constantly surrounding us; in friends and health, in home and happiness. Our wants are all supplied by this good providence, and I humbly trust, my child, that we are rich in gratitude and love, to God and man."

"You have been too young, as yet, to know the story of the past; but you shall hear it now, and understand how we, the widowed and the fatherless, have been sheltered from the storms of life, beneath the 'everlasting arms.'

"Your worthy father, whom you never knew, was once, though not wealthy, in very comfortable circumstances.—Prudent, and always thoughtful for the welfare of his growing family, he made preparations, in the season of health, for a time when premature age or sickness might cripple his energies of mind or body. His efforts had been successful. He felt at ease and happy in the sunshine of his home; perhaps too happy there, and the brightness of our earthly dwelling made us all, perhaps, forgetful of that home 'not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' There came a season, however, which had its teachings, and called that other world vividly to our remembrance.

"Nightly, when your father returned from his business, six rosy, happy children clustered round his knee; in them he forgot his cares, and looked forward to their future without anxiety; but on all this domestic peace there came a blight, as deadly as that which nips the tender shoot when the first frost falls upon it.

"Unfortunately, the large proportion of his property was invested in one institution, where he considered it perfectly secure. That institution failed, and a combination of circumstances followed which suddenly reduced us from comfort to penury. The effect upon your father was fearful. The strong man was bowed down, for in a

moment all his hopes for the future of his family, all his plans for the education and improvement of his children, were swept away, as by a whirlwind. His energies were prostrated. Mentally and physically, he sunk beneath the shock, and like one half paralyzed, he went daily to his usual place of business, seemingly unconscious why he did so. This state of things lasted for three months; but his heart was broken, and one morning, when entering his counting-room, he fell dead, without a sigh or a groan.

"This, my child, was only three weeks before your birth, so that your advent to this world was in a season of darkness and sorrow. It seemed then as if my cup of bitterness were full to overflowing. You were baptized in a mother's tears; but then it was the Infinite Mercy looked upon my sorrow, and through all the gloom I saw, after a time, the hand of a loving *Father*, guiding and directing all things to some great end. Up to this time, worldly cares, the daily arrangements for my little household, had too much engrossed me. Now, left alone, with none to share my responsibilities, no earthly arm on which to lean, I turned with a deep conviction of my weakness and helplessness, to 'One, mighty to save.' And like a good shepherd, he stretched forth his hand, and gathered me and my little ones into His earthly fold.—There we have ever since been sheltered, safe, happy.

"But let me show you *how* His love was manifested towards me. I had a brother, always tender and loving, the dear companion of my childhood; and now God made him the instrument of my relief. He resided then in a distant part of Georgia; and when the tidings of my sorrow reached him, he hastened to my aid. When at last we met, I lay upon my bed of suffering. He took me in his arms and comforted me, and I wept upon his bosom. 'O!' I said, in my anguish, 'my children, my chil-

dren! fatherless, friendless! what will become of them?"

" 'Sister, they shall never want,' he said; 'all that I have is thine. Be comforted. Trust in God—in me.'

"I did—I did, my child, and the promises of God, and of that darling brother failed not. From year to year, his liberal remittances have sustained us. My children have been fed and clothed and educated by his bounty; a bounty inspired of God. As your brothers and sisters have grown up, his good judgment has aided them to select their paths in life, and his assistance has been vouchsafed, until they were enabled to sustain themselves. And now that all are married, and gone from their home, except my youngest treasure," and she held little Anna closer to her heart, "his bounty still supports us in a great degree; for when he died, he left all that remained of his property, which was never large, to his only sister. He has gone to his reward; and we are left to bless his memory.

"Now, my child, are not our riches better than gold and silver? Home and friends, contentment and domestic love. Above all, we humbly trust, a faith in Christ; a treasure laid up in heaven, that fadeth not away."

"And mother, if I pray, shall I always have this?"

"Yes, my child. Pray not for riches which perish in the using; but for *love to God*, which will ensure us *peace*, and *Life Eternal*."—*New York Observer*.

Our Missions.

SHANGHAI—CHINA.

Journal of Rev. A. B. Cabaniss.

A CHINAMAN'S PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

I promised in my last to show that the Chinese have reasons satisfactory to themselves, for the importance they attach to the coffin and shroud, and to all their funeral rites.

They believe that all who are not decently buried, according to the ritual, are miserable after death—their spirits wander up and down the land of "shades," without finding rest.

With this notion of the future state, a coffin, shroud, and regular burial, are things of no small moment to a man about to die. Hence, to ask a sick Chinaman if he is prepared for death, is equivalent to asking him if his coffin and shroud are ready.

HOW TO INSURE A BURIAL AT OTHER PEOPLES' EXPENSE.

So strongly is this belief impressed upon the Chinese mind, that beggars, when near their end, in order to insure their burial, will place themselves in the most crowded streets or gates of the city, as they know the people will then be forced to inter them, to get the corpse out of the way.

In going to my chapel, I not unfrequently have to step aside, to avoid treading on such poor creatures, either before or just after they have died.

SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE MYTHS OF DIFFERENT NATIONS.

The student of mythology is often struck with the remarkable similarity between many of the myths prevalent among nearly all heathen nations, however far they may be separated on the face of the globe. This belief of the Chinese, if not identical with, is very similar to the old Roman idea, respecting the sad condition of those who could not cross the river Styx, as given by Virgil in the answer of the Sibyl to Aeneis.

"The ghosts rejected are th' unhappy crew

Depriv'd of sepulchres and fun'ral due:
The boatman, Charon; those, the buried host,

He ferries over to the farthest coast;
Nor dares his transport vessel cross the waves

With such, whose bones are not compos'd
in graves.

A hundred years they wander on the shore;
At length, their penance done, are wafted o'er." *Æneid, Book VI.*

That the Greeks had the same belief, and were as anxious about their burial as any Chinese beggar, is evident from Homer's describing the ghost of unburied Patroclus as appearing to Achilles and beseeching him in the following pathetic strain:

"My fun'ral rites
Perform, that speedily I may the gates
Of Hades enter. Now, unpitied ghosts,
Pale shadows of departed men, repulse
And drive me far away, allowing not
To find repose upon the farther shore
Of that infernal river."

Iliad, Book XXIII.

It is an interesting fact, however, that this myth of the Greeks and Romans, was derived from a reality among the Egyptians, who had a lake or stream between each district city and the cemetery. When a person was to be buried, forty judges took their seats at this lake, where the corpse was brought for them to determine whether it could be ferried over for burial, by a boatman called in the Egyptian language *Charon*. Any person was allowed to make accusation against the deceased, and if it could be proved that he had been a very bad man, or *had not paid his debts!* the judges decided that the corpse could not pass over. Sir J. G. Wilkinson, in his interesting work on the Ancient Egyptians, says: "The grief and shame felt by the family when the rites of burial had been refused, were excessive."

In the Chinese myth, instead of *Charon** and his boat, they have "the

bridge of difficulty," *one and a third inches wide*, over a river of unfathomable depth and filled with poisonous snakes. Here all the wicked have to pass. They have a wider bridge for the wise and good. Instead of the waters or river of lethe, they have a large vessel filled with the *soup* of lethe, which an old woman dips up and hands to those who are about to return to earth again to undergo a transmigration. This draft of forgetfulness is considered indispensable, as it would render your situation disgusting, and too horrible to bear, if, after you were changed to a hog or an ass, you could still remember the time when you walked the earth as one of its lords, and perhaps looked with contempt upon some of the very men who now kick you about as a brute. The Chinese, therefore, consider it a very charitable act to have an artificial head made and put into the coffin of a man who has been beheaded,* as they say it is impossible for him to drink the soup of lethe without a mouth. The Hindoos, also, to the present day, believe with the Chinese, that it is impossible for a soul whose body has not received the regular funeral rites, to find rest in the land of spirits. In a memorial to the Governor General, in 1851, against a law which they said interfered with their funeral rites, the petitioners say:

the river, and render the person's passage easy."

Mr. Ward, in his *Hindoo Mythology*, has the following note on the river Styx:

"I do not find that the Hindoos have any ferryman, like *Charon*, or boat to cross this river; though they talk of crossing it by laying hold of the tail of the black cow which they offered in order to obtain a safe passage. It is very common for a herdsman to cross a river by taking hold of a cow's tail."

* The water of the Hindoo river Styx is boiling hot. To cross it after death, every soul is compelled to swim over. But as this subjected the good to punishment, "it was ordained, that the offering of a black cow to a *brahmān* should cool

* When the mandarins behead a man his head is hung up at some public place, as a terror to evil doers, and therefore not buried with the body.

"It is by virtue of such last act, which can only be performed by a Hindoo, that sons and near kinsmen take the property, because, according to the belief of Hindoos, it is by such acts that the father's spiritual bliss, and that of his ancestors to the remotest degree, is secured, and by the tenets of Hindoo religion, the apostate from that faith cannot perform obsequies."*

They also say: "but your memorialists may be allowed to observe that Hindoos are strongly attached to their religion, and deeply reverence the memory of their ancestors—ancestors whose spiritual welfare, they believe, entrusted to them as the most sacred duty of their lives."

By a simple change of names, this memorial might, in many respects, pass very well for a Chinese document, and I have made this quotation, as well as others, from Greek and Roman writers, to show that the Chinese belief is not so very different from that of other heathen nations.

As food, raiment, and money are indispensable to man while in the flesh, the Chinese imagine these things are no less necessary for his comfort in the land of spirits. Hence the articles placed in the coffin, the burning the bed of the deceased, burning gilt paper—to be transmuted into current money in the other world, and the annual offerings at the tombs.

CHINESE RELIGION OFFERS NO HOPE TO
THE POOR.

These notions of sensual happiness in the future world, and all their systems of religion, offer but little hope or consolation to the poor, who are not able to bear the expenses of worship while alive, and leave no funds to pay

for funeral rites and for priests to pray them out of purgatory when dead, and who may also leave no one to make offerings at their graves.

The rich are, therefore, considered thrice happy, both for time and eternity. When I have asked very poor Chinese if they worshipped gods, the ready reply has been—"Can't afford it."*—How different the religion of Christ!—"the poor have the gospel preached to them."

Justice to the priests, however, demands I should state that they annually carry around a subscription for a feast to be given to unburied and friendless ghosts—and to pay for saying mass for their repose. They assure everybody that it is a very laudable work, all who subscribe will obtain great merit. Though they place it entirely on a charitable footing, and profess to be wholly disinterested themselves, I still have my suspicions that one motive is to encourage their trade. I once asked some priests, who engaged in this kind of service for such ghosts, if trade was good with them, and they laughing heartily, replied—"hau"—good.

Letter from Rev. A. B. Cabaniss.

Who will heed the appeal of our brother Cabaniss? T.

DEAR BRO. TAYLOR:

Your kind letter, after you returned from your Southern tour, reached me yesterday. I am glad to learn you were successful in collecting funds; and am also pleased to hear of the embryo Theological School at Greenville, South Carolina. God grant it may prove to us a genuine school of the prophets—a nursery of evangelical her-

* The old Hindoo law disinherited the child who changed his religion. The English abolished this unjust law, and thus interfered with the Hindoo hope of future happiness.

* Heathen worship consists in burning incense and making offerings, accompanied with a number of prostrations before the idols. They have no idea of a religion which costs nothing.

alds of the cross, with expanded intellects, liberalized views, (for we are all too selfish,) and a world-wide sympathy. In a word—men of apostolic spirit, who, by the grace of God, will turn the world upside down. Delighted are we to hear the glad tidings of salvation that come to us every mail from your side of the globe. We look upon it as an evidence that God is about to raise up a host in the West to occupy the immense field which is now opening here in the East. The Christians of England are contemplating a noble revenge on the revolting Hindoos, by doubling and trebling their missionary forces in that land. This will necessarily take the most of their strength for some years. But China is opened just at the same time. We therefore confidently trust that God is now pouring out his Spirit upon the American churches, that they may be prepared to fill the opening here. What do you think of it, brother Taylor? And what do you think of it, my dear young brethren, who are just entering the ministry? And you, young converts, whose hearts are yet warm with your first love to Christ? What say you?

Brother Crawford left last night, in the ship *Lizzie Jarvis*, for Puget's Sound—thence *via* San Francisco and the Isthmus route to Mississippi, where he hopes to meet Mrs. Crawford in improved health, and be able to return soon to his work at Shanghai. The care of the church devolves now entirely on me. Dr. Burton cheerfully does all he can, but there is so much sickness this summer, he is very much occupied with his practice.

I think my health is better than it was last winter; but have but little hope that it will be prudent for me to remain here longer than next February or March, without making a change. I can then leave for a while more cheerfully, as brethren Hartwell and Holmes will be here to look after

matters in our church, though they will not be able to preach. They can administer the ordinances, and even their presence will inspire confidence.

Fraternally yours,

A. B. CABANISS.

Extract from a Private Letter of Bro. Cabaniss.

I am glad to inform you that I was never more encouraged about the redemption of China, and the spread of the gospel in the East, than at present. It is now admitted that the outbreak in India will turn out to the furtherance of the gospel in that land, though one of the East India Company said at the first, "Now we will put an end to the Saints"—(missionaries.) The Chinese will now, without doubt, submit to their fate and let missionaries go where they please. They admit themselves it can't be helped. The Russians are rapidly settling on the Amoor, and will open all that Northern country, as they have obtained large possessions there from the Chinese. Two American mercantile firms have been established at a town on that river already. But what surprises everybody, is the liberal treaty which the American Consul General, Mr. Harris, has obtained from the Japanese, and the anxieties they now manifest to profit by all foreign improvements. I recently conversed with one of the officers of the United States steamer *Minnesota*, just from Japan. He informed me they landed—went where they pleased, and bought what they chose, without spies following them, and were everywhere treated with the utmost kindness. They have already built machine-shops and employed Dutchmen to teach them how to make steam machinery; some of the nobility entering the shops as pupils. They had made one engine when the *Minnesota* was there. Surely the hand of God is in all these wonderful

changes in these Eastern ends of the earth.

Truly yours in Christ,

A. B. CABANISS.

Extract from a Letter of Dr. Burton.

Polk, one of our church members, about whom we have felt a good deal of anxiety of late, came before the church last Sunday and confessed that he had been smoking opium for some months, (he had given up opium a short time before he was received by the church,) that he had tried to give it up but in vain—that he was quite willing to submit to treatment, by which he might be able to throw off the evil habit—he resisted his craving for the drug for several months, but being sick and in trouble, he yielded to the suggestions of his family and resumed the pipe. He stated that he had been very unhappy ever since he began the use of opium again, and has been unable to pray for months. (Could one truly converted live for months without praying?) During the last five or six months he has attended church only once or twice. He is now under treatment, and I hope will do well. We are not meeting with much encouragement just now. There is one old man who seems to be interested; he is quite regular in his attendance at our Sing Way Dong chapel, and says he is praying. I hope he may be brought into the fold. There is one other of whom I have some hope,—he seems to be a very amiable young man, and anxious to be taught. I still keep up my services at the Sung Way Dong, though I have much less time to prepare myself.

LAGOS—AFRICA.

Letter from Rev. J. M. Harden.

LAGOS, Nov. 6, 1858.

Rev. Jas. B. Taylor.

My Dear Brother—Yours of July 31, is now before me; and I must say that

I feel with you, that “mysterious are the ways of God, yet just.” Our number here is indeed fearfully reduced, by death and departure from the country; but the Lord’s power is not shortened in the least by that. He can accomplish great things with a few, and it only remains that we should be faithful to our trust. The work is his own, and he will accomplish it in due time. My prospects in Lagos, however, at present, look very dark; none of the heathen, except one, attend chapel. In fact, it is the same case with the other missions. The Wesleyan missionary told me this week that he only knew of *two* persons in his connection who have been real heathen, and nine-tenths of the others have only a name to live while they are dead in trespasses and sins. We are very much disturbed by noise during the time of worship in the chapel. So much so that when we wish to commemorate the dying love of our Lord, we are obliged to do so at my dwelling house. Still I hope for better days. These poor people are very swift to promise repentance, but very slow to perform it. Sometimes I think that they are like Ephraim, joined to their idols. But it may be that the Lord is preparing us by a series of trials and disappointments, that we may be better able to receive an abundant outpouring of his Holy Spirit. America has lately been visited with the greatest outpouring of the Spirit that was ever known there; and why may I not hope for a share of it here in Lagos? I will hope and trust, and pray, and will *not* quit my claim, until a large blessing has been bestowed.—Meanwhile I will beg the prayers and the hopes and faith of the Southern Baptist churches in general, that the above period may be hastened on.

My wife joins in sending love to you and all the brethren.

Yours, in Christ,

J. M. HARDEN.

Letter of Rev. A. D. Philips.

IJAYE, Oct. 22d, 1858.

Dear Brother Taylor:

Time on swift wing makes and leaves its impressions indelibly fixed, and will at the last day unfold to each *man, woman and child*, an approval for well doing, or a *condemnation* for evil deeds!

A few circumstances of late have been transpiring around me that have led to serious reflections, and to praise to the long suffering mercy that has borne so long with people "who knew their duty *and did it not!*"

Once in every few months we have right sharp persecution in Ijaye, and once in a while some of the disciples here are made to suffer sorely from the abuse and *stripes* of their own kindred. You are already aware of the manner in which the people here construct their houses, and how all in one compound is governed by one man. It so happens that the governor of one of these compounds occasionally calls for a general sacrifice and praise to the gods of their fathers, and then each individual is expected or required to contribute something, or at *least* unite in the *noise*. This week a marriage took place in a compound where one of the disciples lives, and she refused to take any part, or contribute anything to the feast, but saluted them kindly when convenient. They seem to have become enraged about it, but for some cause they were restrained further than *words*. Her little son, also cleaving to his mother, refused to worship or offer sacrifice to the tutelary god, and they thought to force him to do so. Then his mother (who had hither remained silent,) was greatly enraged and told me she cried greatly, and they all had a great "palaver." I believe, however, the poor woman, by the help of God, succeeded in getting her son to the farm and at last defeated their desires.

A few Sabbath evenings ago, a boy who is living with me refused to prostrate himself to some worshippers of Orisha who were travelling through the town.

The boy or young man has never given me any evidence of repentance or regeneration; yet rather than he would prostrate himself, he submitted to a thorough beating. This makes me believe that the truth is taking a deep root in the hearts of this people, at least of *some*. We see the poor heathen mother endeavouring to lead the mind of her young and tender offspring away from idols, and bring "it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Other and abundant evidence is given me that the work is going *steadily onward*. Our weekly prayer-meetings are interesting and encouraging. In one of these prayer-meetings I called upon that same mother to pray: and O! what pleadings on behalf of her *children!* her husband and all her country people! Then she begged God to give health and ability to the white man in this country to *preach Jesus*, and to put it into the hearts of *many* of His white children to "come over and *help us.*" When I see the struggles and hear the cries of a *few* poor converts from heathenism; when I know their desire for laborers, and the *tender* regard they have for them, it makes me mourn to think of the *utter* indifference of those in whose power it is to send help, and *to come and help!* After prayer-meeting yesterday evening I was thinking over the events of the day, and some of the prayers or expressions came into my mind. I felt myself happy and cheerful, and was about to ride out, but the thought of that poor, persecuted *mother*, pleading for her son, *her child!* The question forced itself upon my mind, who, Bro. Taylor, is making sacrifice to *help!* Who to-day is deprived of *one* luxury, or enjoying one pleasure less by what they ever gave for the heathen? 'Tis

well that God loved the heathen more than man does, otherwise there would have been no sacrifice, and the *poor heathen would never have been saved!* I have not meant to write an exhortation, but my feelings have prompted me to write the foregoing. Pray for us, and try and send us help.

Your brother in labor and tribulations,
A. D. PHILIPS.

IJAYE.—AFRICA.

Letter from Rev. T. A. Reid.

IJAYE, Oct. 29th, 1858.

Dear Brethren Taylor and Poindexter:

Your kind favours of sympathy were received yesterday by me, at this place.

I had declined writing to you by this mail on account of feebleness, but since reaching here yesterday I have an opportunity of sending a letter to Lagos in time for the Steamer, and I do not wish to let the opportunity pass, as I have never failed, I believe, but once since my arrival in the country, to write to you.

Since the injury to my back, of which I informed you by the last mail, my health has become so impaired, that I considered it indispensably necessary to leave the cares of the station for a time, and endeavour to recruit some. I have accordingly come down here to spend awhile, and think of going to Abeokuta before returning to Ogbomishaw. I am very much reduced in strength now, but hope I will soon improve, as my appetite is returning, and my food agrees with me now much better than it has been doing. I was threatened with a severe bilious attack about ten days ago, but have succeeded in keeping it off, and feel now no apprehensions of it. I need something to give tone to my stomach, which, if I can get, I will soon be up again.

The Lord has afflicted me much since my sojourn in this country, which will result in my good, according to the

precious promises of God, which I have felt more comforting and consoling in this country than ever before. Although I have been the subject of affliction, I am not discouraged, but full of buoyant hope that I shall yet live to see the salvation of God manifested among this people to some extent. Even should it please God to take me to himself, as he has done my dear companion, my hope and prayer for the conversion of Africa would not be shaken. I believe as firmly as it is possible that the Lord has a people here, and he will save them.

We are much pleased with the kind reception which the Board and others have given Bro. Clark since his arrival at home. It is nothing but what his indefatigable labours in this Mission deserve. We hope and pray that he may be the instrument of doing great good in arousing the churches to more active duty, and be enabled to impart much valuable information to them regarding our mission.

I regreted much to be under the necessity of leaving the Ogbomishaw station, for there seems to be an increasing interest among the people, because many attend our Sabbath exercises and some appear very attentive to what is said to them. My old friend still seems to be firm and decided regarding his faith in Christ, and I am so well satisfied of his conversion, that as soon as his health will admit of it, I expect to baptize him. When I left him he expressed great fears that I would not return to baptize him and preach to the people. I endeavoured to reconcile him by telling him that the Lord would do all things well. He told me he believed it and he felt resigned to the Lord's will whatever that was. One of the females is perfectly firm, and despite of all the threats of her owner, she comes to see me frequently, and sometimes to church, always nearly in a cheerful mood. The other is timid, consequently a little wavering. Though

recently she has been to see me to talk to me, and I think will soon overcome her timidity, and come to hear instructions from the Word of God. Her people, with all their threats, cannot make her return to her former customs. I think it will all soon pass off, and they will be allowed to attend to religious services.

I sympathize much with our China missionaries, and hope and pray that they will soon be strongly re-inforced, and their health restored.

Dear Brethren, wrestle earnestly with the God of missions, that the desert land may yet blossom like the rose, "heathen nations be seen bowing before the God we love," and the church of God triumphing over the wiles of the wicked one.

By the September mail we received the January and February numbers of the Commission, filled with thrilling intelligence. Send us every number.

Your afflicted brother,

T. A. REID.

[Christian Index will please copy.]

The Commission.

RICHMOND, JANUARY, 1859.

THE LETTERS FROM OUR MISSIONARIES.

We have received but few letters from our missionaries since our last issue. The letters of brethren of the Yoruba mission published in this number contain much to encourage us. Their own strong confidence in the success of the mission, and earnest pleas for more laborers should meet a hearty response. Who can read the account of the prayer of that dear sister, a recent convert from heathen superstition unmoved? Will not that prayer be heard? Will not God preserve our brethren there and induce many, many more to go? We humbly trust it will be so.

P.

THE YORUBA MISSION.

At one time this mission appeared to have a strong hold upon the affections of our brethren. So great was the interest it awakened, that there seemed to be danger that our mission to China would be overshadowed by it and suffer a fatal neglect. It was even said by some that they did not see that any good was being effected in China, and they thought we had about as well abandon that field. During the past year God has been graciously pleased to revive his work at Shanghai, and within the same period the Yoruba mission has greatly suffered by the sickness and return of missionaries and the death of sister Reid. And now, while strong hopes are cherished for China, it is beginning to be said, "We must abandon the Yoruba mission or carry it on by colored men." Thus, the interest manifested, the hopes of success cherished in both cases is proportioned, not to the importance of the work and a just reliance upon the conclusions of an enlightened judgment and the promises of God, but to the fluctuating circumstances of the missions. Appearances of success inspire hope—but slight disasters overwhelm with dispondency.

We lay down the following propositions not for the purpose of attempting to prove them—we suppose they will be admitted—but that they may be presented at one glance to the mind.

1st. It is the purpose of God that all nations shall be brought under the influence of the Gospel.

2nd. This purpose is to be effected through the efforts of his people.

3d. No place is too distant or inaccessible for Christians in their efforts to spread the gospel, which is within the reach of men for purposes of commerce.

4th. Wherever *while* men can go and reside in the prosecution of trade, *while* missionaries can go and reside to preach the gospel.

5th. Hence, it is the *duty* of the Christians of America, as far as in them

lies, to carry the gospel to China and Africa, since to both these countries citizens of America go, and within them dwell for trade and commerce.

These propositions being granted, it follows, that whatever of difficulty and disaster may be met with in our missions, they are to be regarded, not as reasons for abandoning these fields, but only as incidents to a work which must be accomplished notwithstanding. And shall the *faith* of the Christian be less courageous, less enduring than the *cupidity* of the man of trade? Shall the followers of Christ falter where the votaries of the world do not even hesitate? Alas! that so much more of *worldly prudence* should be indulged by Christians than the world allows to her own children! But are there any facts connected with the progress of our Yoruban mission, which, as compared with the history of other missions, should at all discourage us? It has been intimated that there are two aspects of peculiar discouragement. 1st. The unhealthiness of our missionaries. 2nd. The small number of conversions.

1st. The unhealthiness of our missionaries.

We have suffered much in this respect. Brother Denard and sisters Denard, Philips and Reid have died in Yoruba. Brother Lacey and wife were forced to return by reason of the failure of his eyes. Brother Bowen on account of his own illness, and brethren Cason and Trimble, on account of the sickness of their wives. The brethren now in the field, Priest, Philips and Reid, have been somewhat sick at different times, and sister Priest has suffered much.

This is rather a forbidding expose. But let us scrutinize it. The letters of the missionaries and oral statements of such as have returned, establish the following facts: 1. The sickness of most of the missionaries, where it was peculiar to the climate, was, in most cases aggravated, in some produced by want

of proper caution, and ignorance of the best methods of acclimation and treatment. It is the conviction of brother Lacey that the injury to his eyes resulted from an attack of measles, before he left this country. So also, in the case of sister Cason, it is thought her condition was the result of a similar attack to which she was subjected before she left America. Brother Bowen, it is well known, had gone through what would have utterly broken most constitutions before he became a missionary and which had, doubtless, greatly impaired his—and his exposures in Africa, arising partly from the necessity of his *pioneer* position, and partly from the urgent ardour of his devotion to the work, were extreme.

When these facts are taken into account, we will not be surprised at the *sickness* in this mission, and when they are considered in connection with the often repeated declaration of brethren Bowen, Clarke and Philips, that they see nothing in the climate or country to render it less safe for white men than any other tropical climate—but on the contrary think it better adapted to them than most tropical countries, we shall perceive no good reason for distrusting the practicability of this mission.

It deserves to be distinctly noticed, too, that, generally, the first periods of a mission are the most trying in regard to the health of missionaries. Young persons are sent out who know little or nothing of the laws of health. They are deprived of the counsel and attendance of friends and the aid of physicians—subjected to new modes of life and a new and trying climate. They find it difficult to realize the necessity of caution to avoid sickness, and when it comes they know not how to treat it. Their very efforts to remedy may frequently increase disease. What wonder, if, under such circumstances there is much sickness—many deaths. After some have remained long enough in the

field to have learned from experience, these are able to watch over and aid new-comers, and as a consequence the risk is greatly lessened. Of the first missionaries from this country, many were soon cut off by death. Who has not wept over the early grave of the sainted Harriet Newell? How soon were Wheelock and Coleman numbered with the dead! And the devoted Boardman, had but just begun to see the "first fruits" among the Karens when he passed from the labors and sufferings of earth to the joys of heaven.

If any one will take the pains to investigate, he will find that in all, or nearly all missions to a foreign clime, the proportion of sickness and mortality is much greater during the early periods of their history than in after years. We had intended to give some statistics upon the subject, but owing to the fact that we have been shut out of the office for some weeks on account of alterations and repairs to the building, (the First Baptist Church,) and that the mission library is thus disarranged and inaccessible, we are unable to do so.

2nd. Some are discouraged by the small number of conversions in Yoruba. There have been about 10 or 12 baptized by our missionaries in Yoruba. When we compare this number with the conversions reported by our pastors and domestic missionaries, it looks exceedingly small, and we may be ready to ask, why send our brethren at so great risk of health and life and such heavy expenditure, to preach Christ in that far off land, when so many inviting and productive fields lie near at hand? "But who hath despised the day of small things?" Every enterprise must have a beginning, and, in the commencement of a foreign mission it is not to be expected that "seed time and harvest" will come together. The missionary is unacquainted with the language, the character, the manners and customs of the people. He is a stran-

ger among them, and is subjected to strong suspicion, if not open and virulent persecution. He is compelled to spend much time in building, learning the language and other preparatory work. He finds himself confronted by cherished superstitions, and embarrassed by the ignorance and stolidity of the people. It is not to be expected that "the Word of the Lord will have free course and be glorified" at once, under such circumstances. If there had not been a single convert in Yoruba up to the present time, it would be no just ground for relaxing our efforts. In Greenland the Moravian missionaries labored for many years without a single convert. The Sandwich Islands, now presenting one of the most glorious triumphs achieved by modern missions, yielded their first convert after nearly twenty years of patient toil. The English Baptist missionaries were in Bengal seventeen years before any visible results of their success in winning souls. After Judson had been in Burma three years, he wrote under date of August 3d, 1816, "If any ask what success I meet with among the natives, tell them to look to Otaheite, where the missionaries labored nearly twenty years, and, not meeting with the slightest success, began to be neglected by all the Christian world, and the very name of Otaheite began to be a shame to the cause of missions; and now the blessing begins to come. Tell them to look at Bengall also, where Dr. Thomas had been laboring seventeen years before the first convert, Kershana, was made. * * *. If any ask, what prospect of ultimate success is there? Tell them, as much as that there is an Almighty and faithful God, who will perform his promises no more." It was three years later, June 27th, 1819, that the first Burman convert, Mounng Nau, was baptized.

So far then from discouragement, we have, in this respect, great cause for gratitude and confidence in regard to

this mission. God has signally blessed the labors of our brethren, and unless we are prepared entirely to discredit their testimony, we must believe that "a great door and effectual" is opened before us in Yoruba. Let us throw all our doubts and fears to the winds, or, rather, let us take them to the throne of grace, and, trusting in the divine promises, enter more heartily and energetically into the work. P.

JAPAN AS A MISSIONARY FIELD.

The empire of Japan comprises several islands, one which is about eight hundred miles long, and others of various sizes; several of them larger than Great Britain. The population is not far from forty millions.

The Portuguese opened a trade with Japan in the sixteenth century, and thus the Roman Catholics gained a foothold among them. This trade was very lucrative, but the rapacity of the Portuguese, coupled with the intrigues of the Jesuites, so exasperated the government and the people, that they commenced a persecution against all bearing the name of Christian, which ceased only with the entire extirpation of every vestige of Christianity. Since then, until within a recent period, no Christian nation, except the Dutch, have been allowed any intercourse with the Japanese, and to these very few privileges were granted.

About four years since, Commodore Perry, U. S. N., succeeded in forming a treaty with the Government, under which it was permitted to the United States to have a Consul-General residing in the empire. Mr. Townsend Harris, who was appointed to this office, so far succeeded in overcoming the suspicions of the authorities, that in July last, he negotiated a far more liberal treaty. In addition to the political privileges thus secured, the treaty provides for the liberty of erecting Christian churches

and maintaining Christian worship in any part of the empire.

Soon after the negotiation of this treaty with the U. States, similar treaties were made with Russia and England.

Thus Japan is opened to the efforts of the friends of Christ. Doubtless great prudence and caution will be required by such as attempt to propagate the Gospel in that empire, to avoid exciting the prejudices of the people and awaking the distrust of Government. But it is certain that the way is opened for effort.

The Board have, from time to time, had under consideration the propriety of establishing a mission in Japan. Several years past one of their most devoted missionaries in China pressed the subject upon them, and so great was his desire to see such a mission established, that, he offered, should the Board deem it advisable, and if no suitable man could be found to commence, to go himself and make a beginning. At that time it did not appear proper to commence such a mission. Now, everything seems to invite to it. Can the men and the means be found? It will not be wise to enter upon this or any similar undertaking to the injury of existing missions. On the contrary, these must be greatly strengthened if they are to accomplish their aims. There can be no doubt that our churches are in every respect strong enough to sustain *well* existing missions and to carry on others. Will they put forth their strength? We should be glad to hear from brethren on this subject. Shall we undertake a mission in Japan? P.

As appropriate to the question which we ask above, we make the following extract from the American Messenger: "THE BEST FOR THE MISSIONARY WORK."

The word of God cannot make pro-

gress in our world, says the Rev. Dr. Budington, except by the consecration to God of the costliest, the dearest, and the best. The law that brought the Son of God from the Father's bosom still holds, and as in apostolic days, so now, Christians must "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." The life that is to revive the dead churches of the East, must come from the best life of the West. The light that shall reilluminate the seven candlesticks of Asia, now dark, must be carried to them from the blazing altars of Christian England and America.

What is it but the life of Christ prolonged, and his death lived over again, when from the best Christian culture of New England, the blossom of families that for two centuries have been perfecting fruit in Christ's service, from the Parish of Jonathan Edwards, and from the grave of David Brainerd, the youthful Stoddard goes forth to insert his life into the Nestorian, and to hallow with his dust the soil of Persia, as before him Martyn had, whose feet had never strayed around Brainerd's grave, but whose spirit had caught inspiration from his life? As it is the law of love for the highest to seek the lowest, and the "chiefest to be servant of all," so it is the condition of redemption, for the pure to mingle with the impure, the enlightened with the degraded, and mingling with them to suffer with and for them. It is the lesson for the incarnation, abiding in the church as a type and a spirit, "The disciple is not above his Master;" and they who with apostolic zeal succeed to the Redeemer's work, do "always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."

And this work is but just begun; the sacrifices that have been made are but drops that precede the shower. The lonely grave of Martyn at Tocot, and that of Stoddard looking out solitarily from Mount Seir, will ere long be surrounded with kindred in Christ, and saintly dust shall hallow not only the old historic countries from whence the human race began their pilgrimages, and over which walked the Son of God, but it shall yet be thickly strewn over the islands of the ocean, and through those central regions of Africa which God still curtains closely from the gaze and research of his church. Instead of thinking that our

refinement is too great, and our culture too perfect for the work of missions, we are rather bound to believe that the piety has not yet been nurtured, nor the resources gathered of learning and Christian magnanimity, which are adequate to the work, and fitted to the sacrifice of laying foundations amid the central darkness of heathenism. Forth from happier and holier homes, from higher ranks of scholarship in universities and seminaries of sacred learning than any that now exist, and forth from churches more favoured with the presence of their Lord, and communions nearer that above, must missionaries go, before "the heathen shall be given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."

Other Missions.

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
FOREIGN MISSIONS.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

SOUTHERN ARMENIANS.

A letter just received from Dr. Pratt communicates the painful intelligence that Mrs. Beebe, of Marash, was called to her rest on the 28th of October. "Her end was calm and peaceful, full of quiet trust and submission."

SANDWICH ISLANDS.

A letter from Mr. Clark announces the arrival at Honolulu, September 16, of Rev. Anderson O. Forbes, who sailed from New York, August 5. "Arrangements have been made for him to commence his labours on Molokai."

CEYLON.

Mr. Sanders mentions the organization, in August, of a new church at Valany, consisting of fourteen members previously connected with the church at Batticotta, and the ordination of a native pastor, (D. Stickney,) over the church thus formed, on the 2d of September. The exercises, he says, were very interesting, and everything passed off pleasantly. Mr. Sanders says: "Stickney sustained the examination well, and I trust that he may make a faithful shepherd for that little flock. Our native pastors are do-

ing well, and their influence is telling with power upon the churches over which they are watching." Ten individuals, most of them from the school, have been recently received to the church at Oodooville.

MADURA.

Mr. Webb, of Dindigul, wrote from Madras, September 14:

"I am happy to be able to inform you, that I have never had more ground for encouragement in the work of my station than I have at the present time. There is now a very general spirit of inquiry on religious subjects among the people, and in some places a good deal of interest and earnestness are manifested; with a desire to join the Christian congregations in the towns and villages.

"During the past six months, I have had the pleasure of registering the names of about one hundred and fifty new catechumens, and of receiving twenty individuals to the table of the Lord. On the Sabbath previous to my leaving Dindigul, ninety-one members partook of the Lord's Supper, of whom about eighty were new members of the three churches into which, during the present year, the church at that station has been divided."

MADRAS.

Mr. Winslow, in a letter dated September 27, says: Since writing before he had received one pensioned Sepoy to the church by baptism, and one young man by letter from Jaffna. "There are now four candidates for reception."

SYRIA.

Mr. Ford wrote from Beirut, October 18:

"The affairs of Syria are in rather a disturbed state; but this does not in the slightest degree hinder missionary labour. On the contrary, we see, amid all these overturnings, evidences of the awakening of the public mind, and for a feeling after something better, which will, we hope, be met in the case of many, by that 'one thing needful' held out to them in the gospel."

DAKOTAS.

Mr. Riggs, writing briefly from Hazelwood, November 2, says, with reference to temporal prospects, that the corn crop of the Indians is very abun-

dant, and they are selling to the government, traders and others. He also remarks:

"In the government doings here there are some hopeful appearances. A steam saw-mill has been erected at the mouth of Bush brook, just below Dr. Williamson's, which has gone into operation within a few days. Three others, I understand, are expected to be in operation before the first of January, on other parts of the Reservation. To the one near us is appended a shingle-mill; the grist-mill will be added.

"Since we concluded to take boys, there has been quite a desire manifested to get scholars into our boarding-school. Our present number is fifteen, viz: eight boys and seven girls. Several other applications for boys have been made, which we have declined for the present.—*Missionary Herald*.

HOME PROCEEDINGS.

EMBARKATION.

Rev. Edward Chester and Mrs. Sophia Chester, both of New York city, Mrs. Martha E. Taylor and Mrs. Elizabeth A. Noyes, of the Madura mission, and Miss Sarah Ashley, of Milan, Ohio, sailed from Boston, December 8, in the ship Como, Captain Cobbs, for Madras. Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Noyes are returning to the Madura mission, with which they have been connected for some years, and Mr. and Mrs. Chester and Miss Ashley are to join the same mission. Mr. Chester is a graduate of the Union Theological Seminary.—*Missionary Herald*.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT
STATE OF THE MISSIONS OF
THE AMERICAN BOARD.

Missions, :	25
Stations,	122
Out-stations,	109

Labourers Employed.

Ordained Missionaries (11 being Physicians,) .	166
Physicians not ordained, .	4
Other Male Assistants, .	11
Female Assistants, .	196
Total labourers sent from this country, .	377
Native Pastors, .	20

Native Preachers and Catechists,	188
Native Helpers,	314
Whole number of Native Helpers,	—522
Total labourers connected with the missions,	—899
<i>The Press.</i>	
Printing Establishments,	8
Pages printed last year,	45,489,346
Pages printed from the beginning,	1,080,481,083
<i>The Churches.</i>	
Churches, (including all at the Sandwich Islands,)	139
Church Members, do. do.	27,740
Added during y'r, do. do.	1,532
<i>Educational Department.</i>	
Seminaries,	6
Other Boarding Schools,	17
Free Schools, (312 supported by Hawaiian Government,)	619
Pupils in the Free Schools, (8,460 do.)	16,128
Pupils in the Seminaries,	348*
Pupils in the Boarding Schools,	544*
Pupils in all the Seminaries and Schools,	—17,020
<i>Missionary Herald.</i>	

MISCELLANY.

ISLANDS.

Fiji, or Feejee, a group of islands in the South Pacific. There is said to be one hundred and fifty-four islands in the group. The Wesleyans have had missions there for years, and have brought thousands from the grossest darkness to the marvellous light of the gospel. "At the present time," it is said in the Wesleyan Notices, "there are but eight missionaries, yet there are upward of seven thousand members, nearly two thousand on trial for church fellowship, and fifty-five thousand four hundred and eighty-one stated hearers!" The missionaries plead for reinforcements, and say: "It is very questionable whether, at the present moment, there is such a

* The pupils in the Lahaina, una Seminary and other boarding schools at the Sandwich Islands, supported by the government, were included last year in this enumeration, but are not the present year.

desire for religious instruction as exists in Fiji in any other part of the wide, wide world. Do not refuse us," they say, "*every Sabbath nearly thirty thousand meet to hear without a preacher.*"—It seems singular, but such is the fact, that these people and the missionaries depend for men and means upon the Christians in Australia, being a part, as they are, of the Australasian Wesleyan Conference.

The Wesleyans sent out in September four missionaries to New Zealand, two to Melbourne, Australia, one to Port Natal, and one to Western Australia.

GO FORWARD.

God, in answer to the prayers of his people, is removing by his providence the barriers, and opening up a highway for the onward march of his people, and the extension of his kingdom. The voice of God to his people now, as it was to the children of Israel on the banks of the Red Sea, evidently is "go forward." The three hundred and sixty millions of the vast empire, China perishing in heathen darkness, and now about to be rendered accessible to the saving influences of the gospel, are calling in piteous tones to the people of God, that they "go forward;" the Holy Spirit, by His wonder working power upon the hearts of the people in America, is saying to the church, "go forward;" the preparatory work which, in the Providence of God, is going on in the heart of this as well as other heathen nations, for the reception of the truth, demands that the people of God "go forward;" the united cry of missionaries in the field to their brethren at home is "go forward." Should not the united response come up from the managers of missionary societies, from pastors and deacons, from the members of the churches, male and female, young and old, "*come, let us go up at once and possess the land?*"

A FATHER'S PRAYERS.

"For my own part," says the excellent Mr. Flavel, "I must profess before the world that I do, from the bottom of my heart, bless the Lord, who gave me a religious and tender father, who often poured out his soul to God for me. The prayers and blessings left by him before the Lord, I esteem *above the fairest inheritance on earth.* Oh, it is no small mercy to have thousands of fervent prayers lying before the Lord in heaven for us.

"WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN."

There is a whisper ringing clear,
 In every sleepless listener's ear,—
 A whisper of but scanty cheer,
 And heard distinctlier every year:
 "You might have been—you might have been."

Breathing throughout the hush of night,
 It shows companionship and light;
 A knell, a blessing, and a blight,
 We profit, if we hear aright—
 "You might have been—you might have been."

As memory bids the past arise,
 The soaring hopes that swept the skies,—
 (Each in its narrow grave now lies.)
 We hear, and not with tearless eyes,
 "You might have been—you might have been."

We might have won the meed of fame,
 Essayed and reached a worthier aim,
 Had more of wealth, and less of shame,
 Nor heard, as from a tongue of flame,
 "You might have been—you might have been."

H.

TRODDEN FLOWERS.

BY TENNYSON.

There are some hearts that, like the loving vine,
 Cling to unkindly rocks and ruined towers;
 Spirits that suffer and do not repine—
 Patient and sweet as lowly trodden flowers,
 That from beneath the passer's heels arise,
 And give back odorous breath instead of sighs.

But there are other hearts that will not feel
 The lowly love that haunts their eyes and ears;
 That wound fond faith with anger worse than steel,
 And out of pity's spring draw idle tears.
 O Nature! shall it ever be thy will
 Ill things with good to mingle, good with ill?

Why should the heavy foot of sorrow press
 The willing heart of uncomplaining love—
 Meek charity that shrinks not from distress,
 Gentleness, loth her tyrants to reprove?
 Though virtue weep forever and lament,
 With one hard heart turn to her and relent.

Why should the reed be broken that will bend,
 And they that dry the tears in other's eyes
 Feel their own anguish welling without end,
 Their Summer darkened with the smoke of sighs?
 Sure Love, to some fair Eden of his own
 Will flee at last, and leave us here alone.

Love weepeth always—weepeth for the past,
 For woes that are, for woes that may betide:
 Why should not hard ambition weep at last,—
 Envy and hatred, avarice and pride?
 Fate whispers sorrow, sorrow is your lot;
 They would be rebels—love rebelleth not.

CHILD AT PRAYER.

Kneel, my child, for God is here!
 Bend in love, in holy fear!
 Kneel before him now in prayer;
 Thank him for his constant care;
 Praise him for his bounties shed
 Every moment on thy head:
 Ask for light, to know his will;
 Ask for love, thy heart to fill;
 Ask for faith, to bear thee on
 Through the might of Christ his Son;
 Ask his Spirit still to guide thee
 Through the ills that may betide thee;
 Ask for peace, to lull to rest
 Every tumult of thy breast;
 Ask in awe, in holy fear,
 Kneel, my child, for God is here!

THE CHILD'S ANSWER.

Little Nellie L— had lost her father, and her mother was poor. Her sweet temper and her winning ways gained her many friends. Among these was an excellent lady, Miss N—. A glimpse of Nellie's bright face peeping in at the door always brought a smile of peculiar tenderness over Miss N—'s placid features.

She loved to sit by the child softly stroking her hair, and while looking thoughtfully into her smiling eyes, would often say, "Poor, poor Nellie!"

When Nellie shook her head, with a heart too happy to forebode evil, her friend would caress her still more fondly, and then say, "Poor little Nellie!"

The child's heart seemed troubled by these pitying words, for she asked one day, "Why do you call me *poor*? Please don't Miss N—. I'm not poor—why, I've got twenty-five cents, and a good mother."

"Rich little Nellie," said her friend. "A good mother! Ah, how long I was in learning what this little one already knows."

"A good mother,"—could any earthly treasure have made her so truly rich?—*American Messenger*.

THE CHIEF LEARNING.

The excellent Richard Baxter said, if his own heart were obedient to his commands, he would lay upon it, among others, the following injunction: "I charge thee to make the study of Christ, and the great work of man's redemption by him, thy chiefest learning, and most serious and constant work; and in that wonderful glass to see the face of divine love, and to hear what is said of

it by the Son from heaven; and to come boldly as reconciled to God by him."

BOOK NOTICES.

THE LIVING EPISTLE; or, the Moral Power of a Religious Life. By REV. CORNELIUS TYREE, of Powhatan County, Virginia. With an introduction by Rev. R. Fuller, D. D. New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co.

The nature and design of this work will be best stated by copying the table of contents. Chap. I. Few Christians in the world, and the causes of it. II. The prevalent defects in Christian character, and how these defects operate against the spread of the gospel. III. Some particulars in which the religion of Christ must be exhibited in order to evince its divinity, and induce mankind to embrace it. IV. How exemplified religion effects the conversion of mankind. V. The means to be used for the attainment of the piety recommended. VI. Motives which should enforce to higher attainments in practical religion. It is a plain, earnest plea for personal holiness and practical piety. It is adapted to the wants of the times, and we trust will be extensively read. The introduction harmonizes with the work and adds to its value.

BLIND BARTIMEUS; or, the Story of a Sightless Sinner, and his Great Physician. By REV. WILLIAM J. HOGE, Professor in the Union Theological Seminary, Prince Edward, Virginia. Same Publishers.

In this little work the story of Bartimeus is made the foundation of a series of chapters, in which the condition of man as a sinner, and his coming to God by Jesus Christ, are vividly and impressively portrayed. The style is pure, and generally vigorous, but sometimes, we think, rather effeminate. We are not sure, but the author affects the beautiful too much. There are passages of great power and touching pathos. We would characterize it as, upon the whole, a very interesting and impressive exhibition of the great truths of salvation. This and the **LIVING EPISTLE** should be in the hands of colporters.

These, and other publications by the enterprising publishers, can be had of Thos. J. Starke, Baptist Book Depository, Richmond. P.

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