

are taught. How plain Jesus made it all. He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Of little ones he said, "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." We believe, you believe, that from your little pillows, as from Jacob's long ago, a ladder rises to heaven on which your angels are ascending and descending. Yes, and from the cribs of Chinese little ones the same vision may be seen, though as yet their poor parents are blind to it.

But, here we are nearing the great temple we started out to visit. It is a little out of a city, enclosed in a fine plot of ground covering two acres; you see it has three great walls as if joined together—an outer, a middle and an inner wall. After rapping hard at the front door, we hear a voice far within telling us to go round by the back gate. An old caretaker opens the gate and lets us in. We find ourselves in a large garden full of all kinds of vegetables and scattered here and there are fine old pine-trees. The priests are bound to make money out of their religion, and so 'run' the big market garden.

Once inside the temple you find it full of gilded idols—some are on the floors, some hung up on the walls and even ceilings, made to appear so if flying among the clouds. But there are four great brother kings—idols, I will let one who saw them tell you about. "On each side of the room, two on each side, are the colossal images of the four great kings who were brothers, killed in battle.

"The first, with *blue* face, holds a sword, which if waved, so runs the story, would cause a wind to rise in which 10,000 spears would pierce the bodies of men. The second with *white* face, has a guitar; if he touch the strings, fire and wind issue forth. The third with *red* face, holds an umbrella which can shade the universe. Let him turn it, and there would be earthquakes, let him open it, and heaven would be chaos and earth darkness. The fourth with *black* face, holds in his hand a bag, and in the bag a mystic rat. Turn the rat loose and it would be like a white elephant with two wings flying against the enemy..."

Yet, in front of these mighty gods, lies a coffin which some Chinaman 'preparing for

death' has bought and stored away against that day in the sacred spot. And too, the gardener with crass worldliness has not feared to stack away his long millet stalks under the very nose of the kings. And, worse still, notwithstanding the mighty power they could exercise if they only would, they have allowed the aforesaid gardener's hens to peck off the skin of their majesties' legs half way up to the knees and which is as high as the hens could reach. Such is the Chinese reverence for their gods of mud!"

But this temple and these gods are well cared for in comparison with the great majority. Why, see, here are some mud gods out by this roadside, baked and cracked by this blazing sun. How do they come to be there? Very likely put there by their worshippers because they haven't answered some of their prayers. They'll make them mind and see they don't try *that* on them again. Then, here is a roofless temple with its mud gods exposed to heat and cold, snow and rain, looking as if they hadn't washed their faces for a year. And there on the altars before them are pitiful sprigs of willow and faded peach blossom.

But as a rule, things are not left in this sad way. For once a year the people become very religious and get up a big show, a kind of a stage-play, that they call "Opening the Light" to raise money enough to fix up things a bit, and especially to repaint the mud gods, and so open their eyes to see their needs over again. Need I write how great is the need of these poor people to know our God and Saviour!

Now, my young fellow-travellers, before taking you by the hand and saying how I enjoyed your company with me on these trips through Honan, I should tell you a secret. It is this, that I couldn't have taken these trips with you and have chatted with you as I did were it not for a fat, round faced, missionary, a lover of boys and girls, who, living in Honan sent me in his letters accounts of these things. Mine have only been the bits of twine that have tied his observations and facts together. If they have given you pleasure and information, no one will be more rejoiced than he.

J. MACG.