

advance, the number of missionaries was well-nigh doubled, and the presence of the missionary, hitherto confined almost exclusively to a narrow border along the sea coast, had by this time reached to the farthest inland points, and seemed like a formal occupation of the empire.

But all the gains that had been reported at this Conference of 1890 were slight compared with the prodigious advance that has been made since that date, and particularly during the last few years. Whether we consider the openness of the field, the accessibility of the people, the numbers seeking admission to churches, the number and quality of those employed in the native agency as pastors and teachers, the thronged condition of mission schools and the high order of ability that is trained in them, or the new spirit that is abroad in the empire inquiring after the knowledge and arts and machinery and methods of Western life, it is plain that a crisis has been reached, that China is entering upon a new era which promises the best things for the growth of the missionary work as well as for the reformation of the government and the improvement of the conditions of the people.

When we remember the ninety years of missionary service that have been spent upon China, the scores and hundreds of able and devoted men and women whose lives have been given to laying the foundations, and when we mark the breadth and solidity of the work already done, the churches and schools and hospitals and homes where the Christian faith and life are embodied, and note how widely their leavening influence is felt, how great is their moral power, how ripe the harvest in a thousand fields, and how in other lines—political, educational, commercial, and social—a new era is dawning upon this great empire of the East, we are awed and thrilled as the plans of God are disclosed and our duty set in clearest light.

It is the critical and inspiring hour, when Bulcher's reinforcements arrive and the stubborn contest goes at last against the French. It is enough to inspire enthusiasm in the coolest observers—enough to kindle faith in the veriest skeptics—to be on the field at this time and note the signs of change and feel the impulse of still greater changes just at hand. Our men and women at the front have toiled in patience and waited in hope through weary years and countless obstacles, until at last their victory is near and the land may be won.

It is not to be thought of that at this juncture, just as the accumulated results of years is within grasp and the great end we have prayed and labored for is in sight, that now we should slacken our hand and withhold our men and our gifts—and suffer the victory to slip from our grasp. Faith in God, loyalty to the honored dead and the living—equally deserving our honor—consistency with ourselves and our prayers, the careful hus-

banding of cost and labors past, these all conspire resistlessly to press us on to finish the work and win the land to God.

### PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENTS IN CHINA.

MRS. J. T. GRACEY.

The interest in the movement against foot-binding in China is spreading throughout the country, not only among the missionaries and in their schools, but among all classes of the population. The bandages are being loosened, and many prominent men say that the custom shall cease as far as their children are concerned. It is a most significant fact that a native official in southern China has recently issued a proclamation forbidding the expenditure of large sums of money for betrothals, and discouraging the custom of foot-binding. Another conservative official has written an introduction to an anti-foot-binding tract. Parlor meetings have been held also in several cities by English ladies interested in the movement. In the city of Shanghai a gentleman, the manager of a silk factory, arranged for a meeting, and the women and girls, numbering nearly a thousand, were allowed to attend. Speeches were made by several ladies, and a Chinese Christian woman presented the subject with great force, and the women, by nods and words, confirmed all she said. At a second meeting held in the same city a number of European ladies were in attendance, and some of the Chinese women said they were willing to co-operate in the efforts being made by them to abolish the custom.

Illustrated literature bearing on the subject was freely distributed. A Chinese gentleman living near Tientsin has contributed one hundred dollars toward the expenses of the movement, and others have signified their willingness to make donations for literature on the subject, to be distributed.

It was a moment of supreme delight to our workers when the Annual Conference in Foochow, China, at the earnest recommendation of the Woman's Conference, adopted resolutions forbidding binding of the feet of any Christian child, the betrothal of sons to bound-footed girls, and that all Christian women, when possible, shall unbind the feet, and that all bound-footed children of Christian parents shall unbind.

Surely these are most significant signs of a revolution in some of the ancient and cruel customs of the old Empire.—*Mrs. J. T. Gracey in Woman's Missionary Friend.*

North Africa has one Protestant missionary to 125,000 Moslems; the Sahara has one to 250,000, the Soudan, one to 45,000,000, West Africa, one to 30,000, Central Africa, one to 80,000, South Africa, one to 14,000 heathen.