

towns about one in every ten was able to read, while in the rural districts not more than one in every hundred, while among the women in city and country probably not one in a thousand could distinguish A from B, would you think it advisable to employ a number of men to spread Bibles broadcast among the people; in most cases selling the books at half what the paper cost? Remember that in China there is very little desire to learn to read, and that it is a new doctrine the Bible speaks of, which they have no desire whatever to know about; and even that if they had the desire, the terms used are meaningless to them, or else convey a meaning so remote from the Christian meaning that it is worse than absurd. After talking to man for an hour about one God, using all the illustrations and explanations possible, he will turn around and tell his comrade that your doctrine is the same as their own, viz.: the worship of heaven and earth and ancestors.

I am so tired hearing people speak as if this people were waiting and longing for the Gospel, and that you have only to come and tell the glad tidings to meet with a hearty response. I wish they were in our chapel for one month to see some of the cold indifference with which we meet week after week and month after month. Then, too, it is time to stop praising the Chinese for their intellectual attainments. Their so-called scholars are ignorant of everything outside of their own classics, and they only know these classics in a mechanical way, just as a man might be able to recite the whole of Plato, together with the comments and explanations of his pupils and not be able to tell the why or wherefore of a single opinion, only that Plato said so and so.

One day when reading the Sacred Edict I came to a place under the heading, "Respect kindred, in order to display the excellence of harmony," where it told about an ancient worthy, by name Chin, whose kindred were very numerous, upwards of (700) seven hundred, and yet they all ate their meals as one family. To that family belonged one hundred dogs, which all fed in one kennel; if one dog did not come the others would not eat. The explanation was as follows: "Consider this, Mr. Chin; the persons in his family lived in harmony, hence the very dogs were reno-

vated." I naturally laughed when I read this and my teacher looked grave and somewhat displeased, so I asked him if he really believed such nonsense, and he said he did. I asked him how he proved that Mr. Chin's conduct could change the actions of a single dog, and all the reply I could get was, the Emperor Kang-Hi said so, and it must be true. So with all their classics, no matter how illogical a statement may be: "The Master said so," and some other wise man said the true meaning was so and so. "But," you ask, "what do you think?" "What right have I, or how dare a fool like me question what the ancients have said?" is all the reply. Progress in China, in any direction, must, therefore, of necessity be very slow; nevertheless, there is progress. Those who do not take these things into consideration are likely to be disappointed with results. It is very discouraging at times to work on, and to all appearance accomplish nothing. But all our work is not lost because we cannot point to a large number of converts as the direct results. The Chinese are in need of the Gospel, but it is not true that old systems are tottering and almost ready to fall, neither is it true that there is any desire on the part of the people as a whole for a change.

The educated classes are shut up in their pride and ignorance. They already, in their own minds, know everything under the sun worth knowing, and as firmly believe that anything the foreign barbarians believe and teach is entirely beneath the notice of the "superior men" of the Middle Kingdom. It is a problem, as yet without solution, how to reach the upper classes in China. Not one in one million, I suppose, has yet been influenced to such an extent as to thrust himself, heart and soul, into the work of enlightening his race. And so long as the present terrible hatred to the foreigner exists and is fostered, humanly speaking, they will never be reached. What bearing has this fact on mission work in China? Much every way, I think. The uneducated classes have such a reverence for learning, although very little real desire for it themselves, and hold the opinions of the teacher class in such high estimation that it is a difficult task to permanently influence them along a line seemingly directly opposite to the teachings of their great sages. They know,