

## MISSION FIELD.

## MISSIONS IN CHINA.

Though the total number of Chinese Christians forms a very minute fraction of the total population of this vast empire, it is by no means insignificant compared with the very small band of preachers who have as yet devoted their energies to work in this gigantic field.

We must bear in mind that it is not yet seventy years since the very first missionary of the reformed faith set foot in China. Talk of a needle in a bundle of hay! A needle in an overgrown haystack would be but a poor comparison for one Christian commencing work alone among these 400,000,000. It was no wonder that six years elapsed ere in 1841 Tsai Ako, the first convert, was baptized.

For twenty-seven years Dr. Robt. Morrison toiled unceasingly, preparing the way for those who should follow, but during all those years only three fellow-workers came to his help. Until 1842 the actual mission work had scarcely begun. After this it became evident that the new religion was beginning to take root (a feeble plant in its infancy, but one which, nevertheless, may yet overshadow the whole empire).

By 1853 the Protestant missions numbered 350 Chinese communicants. In 1863 these had augmented to 2,000. Ten years later showed a further increase to 8,000, and now 22,000 well-proven converts kneel at the Christian altar, while about 100,000 regularly attend Christian services—not as a matter of form or of habit, but from determination to learn the truth at whatever cost. From this number have been selected about 1,100 earnest and devout men who work as catechists, and a handful of the most able and eloquent have been ordained to the Ministry. Yet even these, added to the 500 foreigners now working in various parts of the great empire, are but as a grain of salt to a barrel of horning as compared with the multitudes lying utterly beyond reach of their influence.

If you consider the mere size of China—that it is 104 times as large as England, 176 times as large as Scotland, forty-four times the size of the United Kingdom—and then consider that Scotland alone claims the whole services of 3,845 ministers, while Great Britain absorbs 35,000, each of whom finds work enough in his own sphere, it is evident that 1,600 Chinese and foreign Christian teachers can only reach a very small proportion even of the people of China proper, to say nothing of the vast outlying regions beyond.—From "Wanderings in China," by Miss Gordon-Cumming.

## AN OBJECT WORTH LIVING FOR.

The lives of Christian young ladies are too often deprived of all interest by a false and foolish parental affection. I once knew a

mother of two of the finest little girls I ever saw, who was insanely anxious about their health. The wind was never suffered to blow on their rosy cheeks; they were kept in bed for days if they chanced to sneeze; and the mother's life was one long misery for fear they should be ill. She succeeded at last in making them ill, and soon after she died of over-anxiety. Then the girls left to themselves, got well. Now, few mothers are so foolish as to the bodies of their children; but the characters of too many are developed under similarly unnatural shelter and protection. It is not natural for a woman grown to be an object of tender parental care. The full-fledged nestling leaves the nest, and cares for itself, and soon for its young. If a young woman does not marry, and no special demand for her presence exists at home, she should be allowed, yea, encouraged to devote her life to some worthy object, not thwarted and opposed and restricted by petty conventionalities, perplexed by finding her Bible teach self-sacrifice, and her parents self-preservation; her Bible teach her to despise the world and earthly interest, and her parents teach her to put them in the first place.

Alas! friends, my heart aches when I think of the buried talents that exist in the shape of loving, well-educated, gifted daughters, pining in Christian families for lack of an object worth living for; and then think of the miserable millions of their own sex pining elsewhere, and perishing for lack of the knowledge these could impart! Again I ask, Whose is the fault? Dear fathers and mothers, does it not lie at your doors? Say not, "We cannot make our children missionaries; God must call them." I well know that. But do ye your part, and be very sure God will do His.—Mrs. H. Grattan Guinness.

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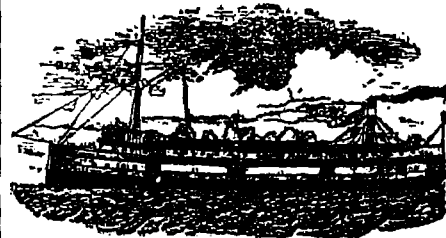
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