

them with a clearer sight of God; gives them a will of more strength and of more freedom; ensures a warmer, a more tender heart. Blessed are they who really love something, who suffer something for Jesus here. For the day of their trial there is for them a vision which no human language can attempt to paint, a vision which shall one day be true to all who have witnessed for the Lord, a vision of a world where all has faded from their sight except the redeemed souls and the ceaseless object of their love.

THE CHINESE QUESTION AND ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECT.

THIS question is one which is exciting much attention on the Pacific coast—especially in California, and also in British Columbia. But in order to understand the question thoroughly, it must be remembered that the property owners—the men who own the lands, the houses, the railroads, the mines, the great ranches—are all in favor of the Chinese immigration. But they are afraid to say much about it. The Anti-Chinese element is made up of what are called the "sand-lots," who are afraid of being crowded out by the competition of the smarter Asiatics. The fact is the Chinese are more industrious, more ingenious, more patient; in fact, able to live and prosper under circumstances that daunt their competitors.

An anecdote from the president of the Pacific Railroad gives a good illustration of the real secret of this anti-Chinese movement. While the road was building, there was trouble on the mountains and an anti-Chinese meeting was called. It was a heterogeneous mass-meeting of Yankees and Irish and Negroes. One great six-footer from Maine put the grievance in a few words: "I have been following lumbering for years," said he, "and I do not turn my back on any man in respect to everything that there is to be known about that business; but, here come some of these Chinese, and in four months' time they know just as much as I do about the business; and they can set a saw just as quickly and just as well as I can; and I am opposed to having the fellows coming here at all." That was a fair and frank statement of the real objection: The Chinaman is smarter than I am, and therefore he shall not come to compete with me.

The Pacific coast is much more likely to go into bankruptcy for want of labor than she is through a surplus of labor. There are abundant fields for all present and prospective Chinese immigrants. You may ride over ground that looks as though it had been dug up in war—mine after mine, mill after mill, some set up and never run, some partly set up, some run for a few months and then given up; and in these abandoned diggings the Chinamen are going to work, and by their industry and economy are making themselves rich out of what the whites have thrown away. They will take two dollars a day out of the mines and think that they are doing very well. One may see them coming into the mint bringing about as much gold as they can carry in their two hands; they leave it there to be weighed, and in a few days return and get their ingot of gold or its equivalent in coin and lay it by. Meanwhile they are living on little, and by economy and industry combined are laying the foundations of what is to them a fortune; and in the process are developing sources of national wealth that the white laborers despise. Then there are millions of acres of alkali lands in the West that can never be cultivated without constant artificial irrigation, and that never will be cultivated by our own peo-

ple. But these are the very people that are used to do this sort of work, in their own land, and are able to do it. Then there are the great ranches, many of which would have to be simply abandoned, if it were not for Chinese labor.

It is true that the Chinese import some peculiar and contaminating vices with them. Perhaps some special legislation may be reasonably required to guard against these vices. It is true that the Chinese seem to set all the laws of health at defiance by their modes of life. Pure air is generally thought to be necessary to health: but it is not for the Chinese. Go into their quarters. You enter a front room with one miserable little window, which opens on a back court on which the sun never shines. You step into that room, and think that no human being could ever live there. But this is their parlor. Back of this is their dormitory—a long, close, narrow lane of a room, with one bunk above another, where twenty or thirty Chinese are packed at night.

It is also true that the Chinese are pagans; but, despite the treatment they have received from Christian America, they are beginning to throw off their paganism and to make progress in a higher civilization. They are fast losing their superstitions. It is proposed to make a law forbidding them to carry back their dead for burial; and a few years ago this would have been to them like a law denying to their dead immortality. But they do not care for it now. Nearly every church on the California coast that has any spiritual life in it has its Sunday-school classes for the Chinese; and they are glad to come into these Sunday-schools, for the Chinese all want their children to learn the English language. They are in the first stages of a civilizing and Christianizing education; and they show an avidity for a larger knowledge that is full of hope for the future. The notion that on a fair field and in a fair competition Christianity has anything to fear from the incursion of paganism is one of essential infidelity. This was not the notion of St. Paul, or of Martyn. If we cannot take these Chinese people into the midst of Christian civilization, put them into Christian churches, bring them under the powerful influence of Christianity in its very home, then every missionary ought to be recalled from China, and no more collections ought to be taken to send out missionaries there. If when God brings the heathen to our doors, where we can bring them into the full flood that flows from Christian institutions, they are too much for our Christianity, it is puerile to talk of sending missionaries to China to mould them into Christians in their own land.

We boast of our religion, we are proud and vain of our achievements; but thus far this Christian continent has not been able to carry the burden imposed on it by God's poor—the Indians, the Negroes and the Chinese. It has fallen down under its responsibilities in the eyes of the world. While we are being attacked on the historic side in respect to fact, it is a truth that an unchristian spirit is itself the worst and most dangerous argument against religion in its dealings with the poor and helpless.

THE PLAGUE IN RUSSIA.

AS to what the disease is which goes under this name we have no definite means of knowing. When it first broke out, the Russian Government, taking its reports from mere local physicians, or altering these to suit its purposes, dismissed the epidemic as a form of typhus. Typhus is one of the maladies generated by extreme filth, and as the Russian peasant is the

filthiest human being known, typhus is a disease by no means unfamiliar in the Czar's dominions. But the death rate became appallingly large. Some of the physicians sent down to the infected district have declared that not one well authenticated case of recovery has come under their experience, and within less than thirty days it has spread over a most astonishing amount of territory. Instead of typhus, they have decided that it is nothing more or less than the plague, whose horrible devastations history has recorded since the days of Thucydides, which has swept over Europe several times since, and which has given to the world Defoe's unequalled work, and the "Decameron" of Boccaccio. Any one who has read Defoe's history, which, though largely fanciful in detail, contains a great deal of valuable information, will remember his constant reference to carbuncles as among the symptoms. The plague is a virulent contagious fever, characterized by carbuncles and swellings of the glands. Where these swellings are most fully developed there is a higher state of fever, greater depression of the system, headache, chills, restlessness and vertigo. So far as can be learned from the native Russian physicians, these symptoms apply accurately to the disease now threatening Europe. With a recollection of the manner in which it has already more than decimated the then known world in various times, it is by no means strange that the utmost vigilance should be exercised by the sanitary authorities of Europe to confine it to Russian territory.

Unfortunately, the Russian peasant, as described by Captain Burnaby in his famous "Ride to Khiva," and by other recent observers, is comparatively dirty, drunken and ignorant. At present he is but just recuperating from the effects of the late war. The advance upon Constantinople was accomplished by the Russians at a vast expense; the treasury was almost bankrupt, and the added taxation made the problem of life to the poor peasant harder than ever to solve. Enfeebled by disease contracted in camp life, by want following upon excessive taxation, and dirtier than ever, he falls a ready victim to infection, and, once infected, dies. Sanitary laws are hardly understood even in the large cities of Russia; they are unknown among the peasants. Authority springing from the personage of a single human being loses its force long before it can reach to the furthest limits of such a territory as Russia, and nothing short of military rule throughout the country can enforce cleanliness where it is not the outgrowth of civilization. Then, too, one-third of the physicians of Russia have either been killed in war or have died or have been disabled by diseases resulting from the war. The plague made its first appearance during a thaw, just a month ago, and the authorities are now fighting it with the assistance of a Russian Winter on their side.

What it will be when the Spring comes we can only guess at. In 1665, no less than 68,000 people died of the same disease in London alone, when London was a very dirty place. In 542 some 500,000 people died in Alexandria and between 5,000 and 10,000 a day for three months perished in Constantinople. It is estimated that in that year in Europe, Asia and Africa nearly 100,000,000 victims fell by the plague. Fortunately our present civilization gives hope that no such mortality will ever again result from any epidemic; but the poor Russian is not civilized. We have had our warnings to keep clean and temperate, and it is cheering to know that if by any chance the pestilence should pass our Quarantine it can hardly obtain a foothold in the country.

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