

worship. In the very earliest record which we have of their religious worship, more than two thousand years before the Christian era, we see their monarch offering sacrifices to these false gods; and the same thing has been done from that day to this. The visible material universe (primordial substance) they suppose eternal; in which the principle of order, eternal reason, reigns. Of all the beings in the invisible world, and the soul's immortality, they are in profound ignorance. They have only confused notions of future states of existence, indescribably vague and irrational. They often fear the gods, and wish to propitiate their favour; but in regard to their own condition in any future state, they seldom, if ever, manifest any serious concern. Gross and carnal, their moral and religious sense is dull. They are almost without a conscience; and the exercises of this faculty of the soul are so faint, and have been so little noticed by native writers, that the translators of the Bible are in great doubt how the word rendered "conscience" in our version ought to be expressed in their language. The phrase hitherto used for "conscience" means, literally, "a good heart."

The Chinese having always been in this condition, all the facts and doctrines which are peculiar to revealed religion, are of course entirely new to them. The Bible, the great treasury of Christian knowledge, contains a multitude of principles regarding faith and practice, of which they have no conception. All these facts and doctrines and principles the missionary must communicate in the language as we now find it, a language essentially fixed and settled in its principles and usages. Accordingly, we are obliged to take their words, with the meanings which have been current for thousands of years, and employ them in a sense essentially new. For example, we must take the word "Shin," commonly used to denote the imaginary beings whom they adore and worship, falsely called gods, and use it for the true God, as he is revealed in the Scriptures. So of

the soul; so of heaven; so of hell; and so of a multitude of other words. Our ancestors, who translated the Old and New Testament, had a language in which the grand truths of revealed religion had already been expressed and made familiar. Not so with him who translates the Bible into the Chinese language.

SOIREE AND EXAMINATION.

The annual soiree of the Sabbath School of the Presbyterian Church at Three Rivers was held on the 27th December. Though the evening was stormy and unfavourable, yet a goodly number of both parents and children were present on this occasion. After tea the children, with their parents, repaired to the church, in which they recited various pieces of sacred poetry with great proficiency, and were examined on their knowledge of the Scriptures and Shorter Catechism. They also evinced some knowledge of the books they had read in the Sabbath School Library.

On the 28th Dec., in like manner, the children of the Sabbath School at Black River were examined and gave great satisfaction.

At both places the parents, children, and friends, were addressed after the examination by the pastor, the Rev. James Thom.

We are sorry that our limited space will not admit us giving this address in full. We can only find space for the two following paragraphs:—

Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. I should fail in duty to God, and to you, were I to part with you, perhaps never to address you more on a like occasion, without taking notice of this important question. Evil impressions are easily made; and the councils that lead you to forgetfulness of the Sabbath coincide with the depravity of the human heart. The Sabbath is the Lord's day, by way of eminence and excellency; because it is holy to the Lord and honourable, and your behaviour on this day ought to be sedate at home, in the church, at the Sabbath School, and in the way. The whole day is for the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy. You will easily see the Sovereign right of your Creator to this seventh portion of your time. He gives you six days of the week for your own employments; but, from the holiness of his nature and government, as well as in mercy to mankind, challenges an especial right in all your youthful thoughts, words and actions, on this holy day.

Memorable are the sad calamities that have befallen nations, families, and individuals,