

# OUR OPPORTUNITY IN CHINA.

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CHINA is the centre of the world's thought to-day. Capitalists, merchants, statesmen, and warriors are all looking to that land as being of vital importance to their various interests. Railroads and mining, buying and selling, diplomacy and warships, seem to have the

right of way just now.

What interest has the Christian Church in China, and what should be our attitude at this crucial moment? In addition to the command to go into all the world, the Church has obligations in this land which must be met. True progress results only when Christ leads. China may be covered with railroads, honeycombed with mines, the greatest commercial country in the world, with a government as good as any, yet without Christ these blessings would prove a curse. Twentieth-century civilization is the result of Christianity. To give the results without the cause would be unnatural, and therefore, unprofitable. In advance of Western learning, improvements, and inventions, must go the Gospel.

The achievements of Christian missions in the past make the obligation still more binding. Experience has shown that the Chinese can be saved. One hundred and twenty-five thousand baptized Protestant Christians, with as many more probationers or inquirers, attest the success of past efforts. The loyalty of the native Christians during the Boxer uprising of 1900 attests the thoroughness of the work

done. Schools of every grade have been established, and have everywhere surpassed the expectations of the most optimistic. Printing-presses are paying their own way, and hospitals are everywhere a welcomed blessing in a land where disease is common and the art of healing practically unknown.

But every converted Chinese means half a dozen awakened, and every church built means several new fields opened. The schools have awakened a more general and more intense desire for learning, and the presses have created a desire for literature impossible to estimate.

1. Four hundred and six millions of people open to the Gospel. Ten years ago there were nine hundred walled cities of China the missionary was forbidden to enter, and in five whole provinces missionary work was practically unknown. Now the missionaries have entered every province, and the gates of every walled city swing open to the messengers of God.

This vast population is practically a unit. There is no North and South in China, no race problem or intermingling of different nationalities. The Chinese, whether found in Pekin or Canton, in Kiangsu or Sz-Chuan, are fundamentally homogeneous. Intellectually and morally the Chinese are the best people in the heathen world. The missionary of the Cross may go anywhere among this people, great in numbers, in attainments, and in possibilities, and deliver his message unopposed.

2. Two hundred and fifty thousand people who might be reached