

The missionary papers were piled on a stand in Mrs. Nutter's own room. "I cannot give these away until I've read them myself," she said softly.

But no sooner had she read them than the young friend at the farther end of the street was made glad by a note from Mrs. Nutter, saying she now wished to subscribe for the *Echo*.

Before many weeks had passed, the missionary societies had a new member; and one day this new member got courage to make a few remarks. Said she, "Too much cannot be said in favor of systematic giving and collecting, in mission work; but I want to emphasize another thought, *systematic reading*, also.

"We simply cannot feel interested in what we know nothing about. Faithful and regular reading will surely awaken our interest and move our hearts to action; it cannot be otherwise, if there is a spark of love left in the heart for the Master. It is my profound conviction and experience that missionary literature is the right kind of kindling to apply to that spark."

—*Home Mission Echo*.

WAYSIDE STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

"Better raise her or not? What do you think?" The questioner was a Chinese farmer; we had been preaching in his village and he followed us away from the crowd to make this important query. The creature whose fate was undecided had been recently born with an extra toe on each foot, hence his dilemma. Farmers at home are sometimes in doubt in regard to animals a trifle deformed, whether or not to raise them, but did you ever know a farmer in America to go about asking advice whether to rear his little baby girl or to take a fan and fan away the breath that God had breathed into her nostrils so that she had become a living soul? The explanation that fell upon our ears was, "I have a female child and she has six toes on a foot; many of the neighbors tell me I better not raise her; her feet can never be made to look well. What do you say?" I said, of course, that this child was given him by the God of heaven; to kill her was murder, a great sin, and one for which he must give account at the judgment Day. The Chinese, most of them, believe in a judgment. This seemed so unexpected that he turned to Elder Khong, hopelessly puzzled, and asked, "What does the teacher say?" "The teacher says it would be wrong for you to kill your child; our religion teaches that." "O-o-h, that's it." And he turned away with the air of a man who had heard some new thing.

The "neighbors" were many of them Buddhists, who were earning merit by vegetarianism, but not causing the death of any animal; but their merciful creed had not included girl babies in the list of animals to be spared. I noticed a similar contrast a few days ago. The body of an infant floated by the boat and some of the men thought it a huge joke, poked it with a bamboo pole and indulged in heart-sickening merriment. A little later one of them appeared leading by a small straw rope a turtle which he had found in a rice field. Turtles here are caught and sold, not to men who can afford turtle soup, but to men who can afford to earn merit by "releasing life," as taught by Buddhist priests. This one had been thus a savor of blessing to some purchaser, and was wandering back to

his home; the men consulted as to what disposal they should make of the prize, when the one, who before had seemed the most abandoned of them all, with a look of real solemnity on his face insisted on the creature's being let go; down he plunged, his fate watched with genuine interest by those who had only heartless jests for the human body in the same place a brief hour before.

The denunciation of the Chicago stock-yards as a blot on the nineteenth century, by a visitor from India, amuses us in the Far East; we wonder if any one asked the man what his attitude had been in the past toward hook-swinging (now being revived) and other pleasant features of the Suttee and Juggernaut variety, pertaining to the worship practiced in the land of his birth. Now that so many are studying Buddhism, we shall be glad to know from them why it is the religion that deceives men with the promise that they can get merit for their immortal souls by sparing animal life, in the lower orders, has done so little for human life, and why its votaries are so callous respecting human suffering and the taking of human life.

Work Abroad.

COCANADA, India, January 29, 1894

Dear Link.

To me has been assigned the pleasant duty of conveying to our many fellow laborers in the home land an account of our Annual Conference in Vizianagram. It will be impossible in the short space allowed to give you more than a very brief account of that pleasant, and we trust very profitable week spent together. It was the largest Conference that has met on our field numbering thirty-three missionaries and their children. Our reason for this may be found in the fact that the railway has greatly facilitated travelling in India, and another, that of the six new workers, five were present. Instead of a long tedious journey by steamer, ox cart, etc., we started from Cocanada on the train and picked up our party at the different stations along the route until we numbered twenty-three. It would be hard to find a happier party, and part of the way our joy found expression in hymns of praise. We can indeed sing the songs of Zion in this strange land and there are depths of meaning in some of them not realized before. Our brethren and sisters of the north met us at the station at Vizianagram about 7.30 p. m. After a good night's rest, the programme was commenced sharp at 8 a. m. Mr. Craig was elected President, Mr. Higgins Vice-President and Mr. Laflamme, Sec'y. There were three sessions a day. The first half hour of each morning session was a prayer and praise service. This part always seemed too short. Can you imagine the feelings of this company of workers, as we knelt before the Master knowing that to us 3,000,000 of souls were looking for the Bread of Life. Such a sense of entire dependence upon Him, whose we are and whom we serve, and who alone is able to break down these hoary superstitions that are so strong. Gladness and courage also, as we remember that nothing is too hard for our God to do, and that this work is only ours, as it is His. That He loves these people and is infinitely more interested in their salvation than we can possibly