

most part mad wretches who deserve no consideration but to be visited with swift and severe punishment. It is not by such men or such measures that the condition of the labouring man is to be improved. Like turning from darkness to light it is to turn from these bloody schemes of wicked men to the gentle, peaceful, but most effective solution of our problem presented by the Word of God. Christianity is both religion and philanthropy, love to God and love to man, the former impossible without the latter. It extends its care from the first and lowest of human wants up to the very highest. No good thing does it withhold. It was, with respect to physical wants, that Jesus said "I have compassion on the multitude." Alas, that so many instead of looking to Him for their daily bread, turn their backs upon Him, and vainly seek to satisfy their hunger on such husks of the wilderness as the strike and the boycott which never have and in the nature of things never can permanently succeed. We are asked to state specifically how the Gospel would improve the condition of the working classes. The request is a legitimate and reasonable one, and our reply will occupy the rest of this paper.

First, the character of Him, who is the central figure of the Gospel reproduced in masters and servants, would promote mutual confidence, respect and sympathy, and would remove most of the difficulties that now appear so portentous. The Lord Jesus was Himself a workingman. In His earthly relationship He was the son of a carpenter, and He chose for His intimate companions, not the rich or the learned, but the humble and industrious. His first recorded words were about His Father's business, and among His last was a testimony that He had finished that business. Every word He ever spoke was in sympathy with the poor and toiling, and His whole life of humility, love, self-sacrifice was a constant protest against their oppression. "It was reserved for Christianity," says Lecky, in his "History of European Morals," "to present to the world an ideal character, which through all the changes of eighteen centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions; has been not only the brightest pattern of virtue but the strongest incentive to its practice, and that has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to soften and regenerate mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

Secondly, the general principles of the Gospel if accepted and acted upon would produce confidence where there is now distrust, and plenty where now poverty reigns. I do not now refer to those Gospel principles which condemn intemperance, ignorance, improvidence, which are the three great direct causes of poverty, although much might be said on this point. I refer at present, however, only to those great Gospel truths concerning the mutual relationships of society, and the duties and privileges arising therefrom. We give the following illustration:—

"We are members one of another." "When one member suffers all the members suffer with it." "The members should have the same care one of another." "Let each esteem other better than himself." "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." "Bear ye one another's burdens." "Ye that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." "If (even) thine enemy hunger feed him." "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you."

Let such principles as these permeate all classes of society and who will say that sanctified common sense in our rulers would not so apply them to the unjust industrial conditions that now bear so hard upon millions of our fellowmen that all legal hindrances to a proper distribution of wealth shall be removed and every one left perfectly free in the exercise of those powers, physical or mental, with which God has endowed him.

Thirdly, the Bible, through inspired poets, prophets and evangelists, demands for the labourer fair wages and prompt payment. Take the following passages in illustration: "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work."—Jeremiah xxii.

13. "The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning."—Leviticus xix. 13.

"Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou shalt give him his hire; neither shall the sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be a sin unto thee."—Deuteronomy xxiv. 14, 15.

"I will be a swift witness against . . . those that oppress the hireling in his wages."—Malachi iii. 5.

"Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."—James v. 4.

"Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."—Col. iv. 1.

Equally clear is the Bible in enjoining upon servants hearty obedience, and good and faithful service: "Not with eye service as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."—Eph. vi. 6.

Thus the character of our Lord, together with the general principles and specific injunctions of the Scriptures, indicate to us a perfectly adequate solution of the great problem of our age. Let the Church awake, arise and do her duty to the masses; let ministers remain no longer silent with regard to

great social wrongs, but with all the authority and power that God has given them, let them proclaim the great Gospel truths bearing upon the relation between employer and employed, making it clear that there is no natural conflict between labour and capital, that their interests are for the most part identical, that capital is indispensable to labour in the production of any considerable amount of wealth, that good wages and good profits may go together, yea, that good wages, by increasing the purchasing power of the masses, may increase the profits of capital. Let it be thus clearly understood and appreciated by all classes that "we are members one of another," and that "when one member suffers all the members suffer with it," and speedily those dark clouds which at present overhang us will pass away and the clear shining of the sun will appear.

"The Church," says a thoughtful writer, in one of our magazines, "is the only power on earth capable of settling this momentous question on right lines, and unless it can be sufficiently awakened to exercise its power, the prospect in the early future for modern civilization is dark in the extreme." I am no pessimist. I have faith in the power of the Gospel, and in its ultimate triumph over selfishness and oppression on the one hand, and violence and exorbitant demands on the other. The boycott, the strike and the lockout are not finalities, and but poor, miserable expedients. There is a better way. Boards of Arbitration have been established in the United States and in Canada for the peaceful settlement of all disputes between masters and servants; and not a few victories are already inscribed in letters of gold on the banners of peace. We are persuaded that the spirit of conciliation, compromise and arbitration will make itself felt more and more as the religion of Jesus advances. We close with the words of Henry George:—

In a really Christian community, in a society that honoured not with the lip only, but with the act also, the doctrines of Jesus, no one would have occasion to worry about physical needs any more than do the lilies of the field. There is enough and to spare. The trouble is that, in this mad struggle, we trample in the mire what has been provided in sufficiency for us all; trample it in the mire, while we tear and rend each other.

PRESENTATION OF ANTI-OPIMUM MEMORIALS AND ATTITUDE OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT ON THE SUBJECT.

The world has heard the affecting story of the determined and implacable opposition to the opium curse of the Chinese Imperial authorities half a century ago; how the old Emperor Tau-kwang, after burying three sons who had died its victims, made such a desperate effort to suppress the import as to incur a bloody war with loss of territory and the payment of vast indemnities, and yet refused to legalize the traffic in those noble and patriotic words: It is true that I cannot prevent the introduction of the flowing poison, but nothing will induce me to derive a revenue from the vice and misery of my people. It is well known, too, how twenty years later this consistent opposition entailed another war, and how the fourth son and successor, Hien-fung, with his palace looted and destroyed by the "civilized" enemy, finally agreed to the legalization of the traffic with the imposition of a nominal duty. It may be known, also, that four years ago after long delay and haggling an agreement was come to which it was thought would be a final settlement of the question, though as a matter of fact it was open to revision after a period of five years. But nothing is settled till it is settled rightly, and the opium ghost will not down till it is put down by the suppression of the use of the drug altogether.

The time for the possible revision of the agreement having nearly arrived, it seemed good to the editors of the *Banner of Asia* at Bombay to propose a memorial from the Christians of India to the Chinese Government encouraging them in their continued opposition to the iniquity, and reminding them that the Church of Christ is not indifferent to the wrongs inflicted on China and is not willing to concede that India is so dependent that it can be saved from bankruptcy only by the plunder and ruin of its Chinese neighbour. The proposal was heartily seconded by missionaries and others, and with little effort ten thousand three hundred and forty-five signatures in many languages (extending 100 yards), including a few names spontaneously sent from England, America and Australia, were obtained to the following petition: "We, the undersigned ministers and members of Christian Churches, desire to record our sorrow at the moral and physical havoc which has been wrought among the people of China in consequence of the opium policy of the British Government—a policy which has been totally at variance with the principles of the Christian religion. We respectfully express our deep sympathy with the supreme authorities of China in their desire to save their nation from the curse of the opium habit, and, in order to further so wise and laudable an object, we would emphasize the importance of acting upon the opportunity presented in the year 1890, under the Additional Article of the Chefoo Agreement (ratified May 6, 1886) to terminate that article and to secure the execution of a new treaty repealing the Tien-tsin Treaty, as far as it relates to opium, and also enacting the prohibition of the legalized importation of opium into China."

The Scottish Anti-Opium Society, hearing of the movement, sent, unsolicited, a similar memorial signed by between six and seven thousand Christian workers in Scotland—all gotten up in a very brief period of time, showing what might be done in Christian countries by extending the time and effort and duly informing and encouraging the people.

The deputation entrusted with the presenting of these memorials to the Chinese Government, Mr. A. S. Dyer and myself, are happy to be able to report a very gratifying reception in China. The official through whom the memorials were presented was that greatest statesman of China if not of the world, Li Hung Chang, viceroy of the metropolitan Province of Chih-li, and Grand Secretary to the Chinese Government.

He was a most appropriate person to receive them, not only on account of his enlightened and liberal views, but also because of his outspoken opposition to the opium iniquity, he having declared as late as the year 1881 that the legalization of the traffic was "not from choice, but because China submitted to the adverse decision of arms," at the same time going so far as to make proposals to the Indian Government to recoup them for a time for their loss of revenue if they would abolish the exportation of the drug to China. Fortunately his exasperation at America on account of the Exclusion Act had largely abated, so that there was no objection on that ground, especially when he knew I had been a resident in India for eighteen years.

The day appointed for our reception was the 21st of last month, he having but just returned from accompanying the Emperor on his annual visit to worship at the Eastern tombs. Having had communicated to him beforehand copies of the text of the memorials and a rather lengthy explanatory statement, he understood quite well the object of our mission, and this no doubt accounts largely for the cordiality with which he received us. He graciously accepted the memorials and scanned the hundreds of names with evident pleasure, promising to present them and our statement to the central Government with his own recommendation that they should have a most favourable consideration. The unmeasured terms in which he condemned the use of the poison showed that he appreciated the evils caused by it, and sincerely wishes its entire suppression, which he said is the case with the other members of the Government. He said it was useless to try to put down the native growth till the foreign import was prohibited, when there would be hope of success. But running through the whole interview was a note of sadness which found expression in the question: Will not the demand for a prohibition treaty with Great Britain bring on another war—a third opium war?

This question, too, quite agrees with other expressions from Chinese statesmen, especially with the last utterances of Marquis Tseng, the late minister to the Court of St. James, and member of the Tsung-li Yamen or Board of Foreign Affairs. Four days previous to his death we had an appointment for an interview with him at Peking, and though at the time appointed he was too ill to see us, yet he had shown evident sympathy with our mission and had given expression to language which should sink deep into the hearts of all lovers of liberty and fair dealing, to say nothing of Christian principles—"We are not free; we cannot take the first step."

Though these statesmen have been assured that public sentiment would not tolerate another similar war, yet they have seen so much of the duplicity of foreigners that they cannot tell what pretext they may use to carry out their designs, as they did in the last opium war. While looking at the Taku Forts at the mouth of the Peiho, and remembering the part taken in storming those forts thirty years ago by the representative of a neutral Government, United States Commodore Tatnall, it has been not a little difficult to me to reconcile that action with the insertion of the Golden Rule in the treaty consequent thereto—an example followed by the not more consistent British Government.

But let us now prove that it is possible and practicable for nations as for individuals to do as they would be done by, by helping with all our might to remove obstacles and stumbling blocks from this unfortunate land and thus prepare the way for our Lord and His blessed Gospel. Pray for China. Yours for His and China's sake, W. E. ROBBINS.

Shanghai, May 6, 1890.

P.S.—No foreigner as yet having had an audience with the present Emperor, we did not attempt to see him, but we got a communication to his father, the seventh Prince, which has called forth expressions of great interest and a desire for more information on the subject. As he and Viceroy Li are next to the Emperor, we may expect that everything will be done that can be done in the matter.

HIGHER RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

MR. EDITOR,—Copies of the Sabbath School report have been mailed to ministers, superintendents, examiners and successful candidates. If any one has been overlooked, I shall be happy to supply the omission on receipt of a postal card with the address. Diplomas have also been sent to all candidates entitled to them with the exception of a few which it was necessary to re-engage. These will be on hand in time for presentation on September 28. The prize-books and medals have to come from the other side of the Atlantic, and will be delivered as soon as possible after they arrive.

The following names were accidentally omitted from the list of successful candidates presented to the General Assembly: *Junior Biblical*—John Bourns, Whitewood, Assa.; *Junior Doctrinal*—Lillian J. Grant, Moose Creek, Ont.; Ruth English (P), Hastings, Ont.; *Senior Doctrinal*—Maggie Meston, Hamilton, Ont.; *Intermediate History*—Isabella Duff, Lakefield, Ont.; Kate Loudon (P), Toronto, Ont.; Christina Menzies (P), Brussels, Ont.; *Senior History*—Maggie B. Adam (P), Hamilton, Ont.

Can we not unite this year in making the last Sabbath of September a red-letter day in the calendar of every school? Those who wish a prepared service, simple, scriptural, instructive and pleasing should obtain that published by Rev. John McEwen, entitled, "Home Life and Sabbath School Work." It costs only 65 cents per 100 copies. Any orders sent to me will be forwarded to the publishers. This is the concert exercise prepared for the Sabbath School Committee, but which the General Assembly refrained from authorizing out of deference to the views of brethren who do not approve of such methods.

The Committee expects this year a liberal response to its appeal for funds. The increase in the number of candidates will call for larger outlay for postage, medals, prizes and diplomas. Although the revenue of the Committee is very modest, the guardians of the Assembly Fund have notified us that we must conform in future to the law requiring all committees that carry a purse to pay for the printing of their own reports. If the General Assembly insists upon this, as it probably will, an altogether disproportionately heavy burden is laid upon a new and struggling scheme. We trust, however, that it will be loyally borne. Those who do not support the scheme of Higher Religious Instruction should contribute towards the expense of printing our report. Any money sent specifically for that purpose will be reserved for it alone. Yours sincerely, T. F. FOTHERINGHAM.

107 Hazen Street, St. John, N.B., Sept. 1, 1890.