

China's Millions.

WE are accustomed to hear that the population of China is "about four hundred millions," but as there has been no complete Government census taken for many years, and as it is extremely difficult to get correct returns, owing to the unwillingness of the masses to have their assessments increased, the ablest statisticians are far from agreeing as to the exact number. Their estimates range from 300,000,000 up to 433,000,000. This vast difference is partly accounted for by differing views as to the legitimate geographical boundaries of the Empire. If Mongolia, Manchuria, Thibet, Siam, Annam, and other dependencies of China, peopled mostly by Chinese, are included, then the larger of the two estimates may not be far astray; but, confining our enquiry to the eighteen provinces commonly known as "China Proper" there is still a perplexing discrepancy. Mr. Hudson Taylor, whose opinion is certainly entitled to great deference, makes a lower estimate than any other authority within our reach. The highest estimate we have met with is that quoted by his brother-in-law, Mr. B. Broomhall, Secretary of the China Inland Mission, from the last edition of the "Statesman's year-book" (1889). As between the two of course we do not presume to decide, only remarking that Mr. Broomhall's figures, correspond very nearly with those given in the 'Encyclopedia Britannica,' 'Appleton's Gazetteer,' and other recent authorities, while Mr. Taylor's estimate is 152 millions less! Adding fifty millions for the above named dependencies (which is a low estimate) there seems to be good ground for believing that 400,000,000 is rather under than over the mark for the whole of the "Celestial Empire."

Whatever be the exact numbers, in looking at China from the missionary standpoint we are face to face with the astounding fact that here is nearly one-third of the whole human-family—dying at the rate of thirty-three thousand a day! A million a month; twelve millions a year! An intellectual race of people, educated, civilized, receptive; still sitting in darkness—waiting for the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How much longer must they wait? How

many more hundreds of millions must go to their graves before Christendom responds as it should to the wail? How many more millions of children are to be born of heathen parents?—The present natural increase of the population is said to be at the rate of two millions and a half annually!

The following table illustrates the discrepancy referred to and will be otherwise useful for reference.

PROVINCES.	POPULATION.		
	TAYLOR.	Year-book	Tosq milc.
1 Kwan-tung.....	17,500,000	29,500,000	241
2 Fuh-kien.....	10,000,000	25,500,000	276
3 Choh-kiang.....	12,000,000	11,500,000	671
4 Kiang-su.....	20,000,000	20,750,000	850
5 Shan-tung.....	19,000,000	56,000,000	444
6 Chih-li.....	20,000,000	17,750,000	475
7 Hu-peh.....	20,500,000	33,000,000	389
8 Kiang-si.....	15,000,000	24,500,000	320
9 Gan-hwuy.....	9,000,000	20,500,000	705
10 Shan-si.....	9,000,000	12,000,000	350
11 Shen-si.....	7,000,000	8,000,000	163
12 Kan-suh.....	8,000,000	6,500,000	175
13 Si-chuen.....	20,000,000	67,500,000	128
14 Yun-nan.....	5,000,000	11,500,000	51
15 Kwei-chau.....	4,000,000	7,500,000	82
16 Kwang-si.....	5,000,000	5,000,000	93
17 Hu-nan.....	16,000,000	21,000,000	251
18 Ho-nan.....	15,000,000	22,000,000	420
Totals.....	227,000,000	379,000,000	

There are, it is true, some thirty-five or forty missionary societies at work in China; among them they have a thousand ordained foreign missionaries who have gathered into the churches some thirty-five thousand communicants. But what are they among so many? It would require *forty thousand missionaries*, allowing ten thousand adherents to each! China will never be converted by foreigners. The task is too gigantic. Rev. Dr. Williamson in his address before the London Missionary Council says:—

"We can never, humanly speaking, Christianize China on the present system. We have neither funds nor forces sufficient. . . . Our present method is self-destructive. The Chinese won't have it. . . . We must lay aside *denominationalism*. The watchword for China is,—One native common union church in China—THE CHINESE CHURCH OF GOD."

A Year of Grace.

THE prevailing note in all the "Missionary Meetings" of the present year has been a hopeful note—confidence, resolute