

Buddhas. In whatever these notions originated, the coincidence is striking, and deserves to be noted by those who think that they can find the doctrine of a Trinity in all religious creeds, and who suppose that the idea was derived by traditions from the early progenitors of mankind.

Another circumstance, in which the three religions of China resemble each other, in their atheism. The Confucians derive their diagrams, or mystic numbers, from the extreme point or nullity; the Taoists talk of myriads of concretions, producing emptiness; and the Buddhist system is founded in nonentity. "No first cause" characterises all the sects; and the supreme self-existent God is scarcely traceable through the entire range of their metaphysics; and yet the Chinese manage to combine the apparently irreconcilable principles of atheism and polytheism. "Gods many, and lords many," are adopted by every sect, and it is more easy to find a god than a man in China. Though they account no divinity to be eternal, yet they discover a god in every thing. Their temples, houses, streets, roads, hills, rivers, carriages, and ships, are full of idols; every room, niche, corner, door, and window, is plastered with charms, amulets, and emblems of idolatry; so that while they acknowledge no god, they are overrun with gods; and find it their greatest burthen to support and worship their numerous pantheon.

TRACT-DISTRIBUTION IN CHINA.

On our arrival at the beach, we were anxious to distribute a few tracts before our departure; but the officer in attendance said, that, as the mandarins had been supplied with books, it was not necessary to spread them among the people. We were, however, of a different opinion; and, opening our stores, we began to deal them out to the by-standers. To our surprise, the moment a tract was held up, a rush was made for it; and, as quickly as we could take them out, they were snatched from our hands by the natives. This caused a tumult; and the officer, finding the people crowd round in such numbers, began with the police runners to beat them off with cudgels. The populace, however, returned to the charge, coming up on one side as fast as they were driven off on the other; until, dissatisfied with our slow method of distribution, they thrust their hands into the basket, and helped themselves. It was in vain to remonstrate, they were determined to have the tracts, and in a few minutes every leaf disappeared; while we, with difficulty, maintained our standing. Had we been aware of their intention, we might have mounted some elevated place, or have pushed off to some distance from the land; but it was as sudden as to us it was new, and when once commenced could not be resisted. No sooner were the books in the hands of the crowd, than they were out of sight of the officers, for the Chinese wear large loose sleeves instead of pockets, and immediately a tract was obtained, it went up the sleeve, so that it was difficult for the mandarins to find or recover one.

Their anxiety to obtain books, however, must not in the least be ascribed to any knowledge of, or relish for, their contents; but merely to an eager curiosity to get possession of something that came from abroad, and an insatiable cupidity to obtain what was to be had for nothing.

ISLAND OF POO-TOO—CONTRAST BETWEEN ITS MORAL AND MATERIAL FEATURES.

We loaded our boats with tracts, and went ashore; where we commenced ascending those romantic heights, crowned by fantastic temples and enchanting groves, so glowingly described by a previous traveller in his account of this island. We soon found a broad and well-beaten pathway, which led to the top of one of the hills, at every crag and turn of which, we espied a temple or a grotto, an inscription or an image; with here and there a garden tastefully laid out, and walks lined with aromatic shrubs, diffusing a grateful fragrance through the air. The prospect from these heights was delightful in the extreme; numerous islands, far and near, bestudded the main; rocks and precipices above and below; here and there a mountain monastery rearing its head; and in the distant valley, the great temple, with its yellow tiles, indicative of imperial distinction, basked like a basilisk in the rays of the noon-day sun. All the aids that could be collected from nature and art, were there concentrated, to render the scene lovely and enchanting. But to the eye of the Christian philanthropist, it presented one melancholy picture of moral and spiritual death. Viewed by the light of revelation, and in the prospect of eternity, the whole island of Poo-too, with its picturesque scenery, its hundred temples, and its six thousand priests, exhibited to the mind nothing but a useless waste of property, a gross misemployment of time, and a pernicious fostering of error, tending to corrupt the surrounding population, and to draw off their minds from the worship of the true God, to the adoration of the phantom Buddha. All the sumptuous and extensive buildings of this island, were intended for no other purpose than to screen wooden images from the sun and rain; and all its inhabitants employed in no other work than the recitation of unmeaning prayers, and the direction of useless contemplations, towards stocks and stones: so that human science and human happiness, would not be in the least diminished, if the whole island of Poo-

too, with its gaudy temples, and lazy priests, were blotted out from the face of the creation.

FUTILITY OF CHINESE EDICTS.

One very severe proclamation was issued in the year 1812 in which the diffusion of Christianity was declared a capital crime; and yet, in the very teeth of that order, Dr. Morrison and his brethren have been carrying on their operations, for the quarter of a century. When the Honourable Company's chartered ship, the *Amherst*, went up the coast, proclamations of various kinds were issued; and the most furious edicts have followed each successive voyage in the same direction, which, if collected, would fill a volume. No sooner had the enterprise described in the foregoing pages, been concluded, than a dispatch arrived from Peking, addressed to the viceroy of Canton, expressive of the emperor's high displeasure, and requiring the governor to take measures to prevent such proceedings in future.

EARTHQUAKE IN CALABRIA.—After the bodies of all the victims had been recovered, the melancholy fact was proved that full one-fourth of the number would have been saved had prompt means been found to disencumber them from their situation. The men were found to have expired in the act of making desperate efforts at disengagement. But the women were generally in an attitude of despair; their hands extended over their heads, the fingers convulsively entwined amongst their hair. Not so with mothers who perished with their offspring; these all appeared to have been careless as to themselves, devoting all their thoughts to the preservation of the infant. With their bodies extended and arched above their little ones, they seemed to hope to save them; or, with arms and hands extended towards the spot where the child was found, it seemed, that although unable to touch it, because of the few intervening ruins, they had the horrid consciousness of the vicinity. Many signal examples were exhibited of the heroism and vigour of men, and of the indomitable power of maternal affection. An infant was rescued clinging to the breast of its dead mother, and perfectly recovered, after being three days under the ruins. An uncle of my old friend and comrade, General William Pope, was dug out alive on the fifth day. A lady with child was liberated by the sole labour of her husband, after being two days buried. Three days afterwards she was brought to bed; and together with her child and husband lived many years. Being asked what sensations she felt in her horrid tomb, she replied, "I waited and waited with confidence, knowing that my husband was alive." A girl of eleven years of age was dug out on the sixth day, and lived. Another aged sixteen, named Eloisa Basili, remained buried eleven days, with an infant in her arms, which on the fourth day died; so that, on their being delivered, the latter was in a state of putridity. The poor girl Eloisa could not possibly liberate herself from the corpse of her little sister, being closely hemmed in by the ruins. A slight glimmer of light penetrated to her tomb which enabled her to count the returns of day. But other authority irrefragably established the facts of this surprising case and those already mentioned.

Many cases of prolonged vitality in animals were more surprising than those of the human species. Two mules lived under a mountain of ruins, one twenty-two days, the other twenty-three. A hen lived also twenty-two days, and two fat pigs thirty-two days. All of the human species, as well as the brutes thus ushered again to-day, preserved for a length of time a sort of stupid weakness, no desire to eat, an insatiable thirst, and an almost blindness.

Of the number saved, many men returned to their occupations, healthy and in good spirits, while others remained ailing and melancholy. This difference was supposed in great part to depend on the period of their inhumation, and on the loss or preservation of hope in the different parties. The young Eloisa Basili, although very handsome, treated with every kindness and amusement by her relations, was never after known to move her lips into any thing like a smile. All those who were buried for any length of time, when interrogated about their sensations, made for answer—"So far I remember; further I thought not, and know nothing." Most of those persons died at premature ages. Eloisa Basili, oppressed with melancholy, refused to marry; neither would she retire to a convent, as recommended by some of her pious friends. Her only pleasure seemed to be in solitude. Seated under a tree, she would sit for hours, her eyes averted from every habitation, and fixed upon the sea. On the appearance of an infant she involuntarily turned her head aside.

THE LORD'S PRAYER ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.—"Let us now," says Erasmus, "imagine we hear a soldier among these fighting Christians saying the Lord's Prayer. *Our Father*, says he. Oh, hardened wretch! Can you call him *Father*, when you are just going to cut your brother's throat? *Hallowed be thy name*. How can the name of God be more impiously unhallowed, than by mutual bloody murder among you his sons? *Thy kingdom come*. Do you pray for the coming of his kingdom, while you are endeavouring to establish an earthly despotism, by the spilling of the blood of God's sons and subjects? *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*. His will in heaven is for

peace, but you are now meditating war. Dare you say to your Father in heaven, *Give us this day our daily bread*, when you are going the next minute to burn your brother's corn-fields, and had rather lose the benefits of them yourself than suffer him to enjoy them unmolested? With what face can you say, *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*, when, so far from forgiving your brother, you are going, with all the haste you can, to murder him in cold blood for an alleged trespass, which, after all, is but imaginary? Do you presume to deprecate the danger of temptation, who, not without great danger to yourselves, are doing all you can to force your brother into danger? Do you deserve to be delivered from evil, that is, the evil being by whose spirit you are guided, in contriving the greatest possible evil to your brother?" Yet there are persons who, while they pass over altogether the impiety and unchristian character of war itself, are horrified at a battle being fought on a Sunday!

POETICAL PORTRAITS.

[The following verses—reprinted from a scrap-book—are the composition of the late Robert Macnish, a man of eccentric and varied genius, who distinguished himself by his contributions to Blackwood's Magazine, and by works entitled the *Anatomy of Drunkenness*, the *Philosophy of Sleep*, etc.]

Shakespeare.

His was the wizard spell
The spirit to enchain;
His grasp o'er Nature's cell,
Creation owned his reign.

Milton.

His spirit was the home
Of aspirations high!
A Temple, whose huge dome
Was hidden in the sky.

Thomson.

The Seasons as they roll
Shall bear thy name along;
And graven on the soul
Of Nature, live thy song.

Gray.

Soaring on pinions proud,
The lightnings of his eye
Scar the black thunder-cloud,
He passes swiftly by.

Burns.

He seized his country's lyre,
With ardent grasp and strong;
And made his soul of fire.
Dissolve itself in song.

Southey.

Where Necromancy flings
O'er Eastern lands her spell,
Sustained on Fable's wings,
His spirit loves to dwell.

Coleridge.

Magician, whose dread spell,
Working in pale moonlight,
From Superstition's cell
Invokes each satellite!

Wordsworth.

He hung his harp upon
Philosophy's pure shrine;
And, placed by Nature's throne,
Composed each placid line.

Campbell.

With all that Nature's fire
Can lend to polished Art,
He strikes his graceful Lyre
To thrill or warm the heart.

Scott.

He sings, and lo! Romance
Starts from its mouldering urn,
While Chivalry's bright Lance
And nodding Plumes return.

Wilson.

His strain, like holy hymn,
Upon the ear doth float,
Or voice of Cherubim
In mountain vale remote.

Hemans.

To bid the big tear start
Unchallenged from its shrine
And thrill the quivering heart
With pity's voice, are thine.

Shelley.

A solitary rock
In a far distant sea,
Rent by the thunder's shock,
An emblem stands of thee!

Hogg.

Clothed in the rainbow's beam,
'Mid strath and pastoral glen,
He sees the Fairies' gleam
Far from the haunts of men.

Byron.

Black clouds his forehead bound,
And at his feet were flowers:
Mirth, Madness, Magic found
In him their keenest powers.

Moore.

Crowned with perennial flowers,
By Wit and Genius wove,
He wanders through the bowers
Of Fancy and of Love.