

veals the hollowness of the people's faith, it shows the falsehood of idolatry. Though bound by habits of age-long continuance to these vanities, the people feel now and again that these gods are unworthy of respect and confidence. I have seen a farmer crowding his grain into a small temple until the ugly, old gods were all covered up and there was no protest on their part. Chinese religions do not gladden the people in sorrow, do not help them in trouble, do not give them hope in death. Confessedly they are silent on what is to us the very core of our faith, the resurrection and the life to come. They know not of resurrection. They have not a solitary satisfactory word to say on immortality. These are only brought to light in the Gospel. The views which the Chinese have of all matters connected with eschatology are so unsatisfactory and vague, that one knows not what to say of them. After death a man may be a devil or he may be a god. He may have three souls, and he may have seven. The fact that these religions give no certain sound on man's destiny, man's immortality, declares plainly that they are after the law of a carnal commandment. Is it conceivable that a man going from China to Canada should find it difficult to make out what the views and hopes of the people are on the question of the future life? The matter is too dear to the hearts of men to be left in such an undefined manner. That such should be the state of matters in China is sad. Heathen religions do not then give to man the strength and joy which comes from faith in immortality. They do not strengthen morality by carrying the consequences of action into the future world, and making glory on high the incentive to a noble, holy, heroic life here below. No wonder if the list of heroes is short in China at this day. Alas for the country whose religion neither begets faith in an ideal life, nor puts man in the way of its attainment. To hear the Chinese wail at their graves is to

know that they sorrow as those who have no hope. The dawn of better days has come in this respect. Already there are many thousands whose hearts rejoice with joy unspeakable in the hope of eternal life. Supposing the religions of China did reveal a future life, they do not point out the way whereby man is to get it. They do not convict of sin, and do not point to a sacrifice for sin. They do not convert the soul dead in sin because there is no regenerating Spirit. Neither do they justify and sanctify. In short, they do not save. The Chinese are as lost as sinners can be, and these religions cannot save them. A Mohammedan priest comes to see us here occasionally, who says he and the Christians are about the same in beliefs; but he says that his religion is doing the Chinese no good. He is an honest man in that matter. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, and the flesh profiteth nothing. When we turn to the Christian religion, a different state of matters meets us. At no time has it ever been dead as these are. In the darkest times there was life and power in it for many a soul. In no age has the Lord been without witnesses to the saving power of the Gospel. Christ who is our life has been in the Church all along. Tens of thousands have obeyed and loved Him in every age, and professed that they were getting life and help from Him. It is so still. His name shall endure for ever, and that not as the name of a philosopher or historian endures, but as a living presence with His people always, even to the end of the days. It is the power of an endless life that is now at work among Christian peoples, converting so many from the error of their ways and making them meet for the inheritance of the saints in the light. In a thousand ways it seeks to make mankind good and happy forever, and in no case does it fail when men allow themselves to be permeated by its spirit. Nor need we fear that the Gospel ever will become