

The Chinese are without inventive genius, but are good imitators. Already they have begun to appropriate English inventions. In the manufacture of glass ware they have been so successful as to drive the foreign article from the market. In the late war they used thirty brass cannon which they had made after a cannon taken from a wrecked ship. They are now making pistols, fowling pieces, muskets, clocks and watches. A thirty-six gun frigate constructed by a Chinese shipwright, was considered by foreigners as quite creditable, and sea-worthy.

They have no knowledge of anatomy or physiology; and their medical theory is therefore wholly empirical, though their practice is improved by observation. They suppose that diseases, are caused by evil spirits, and their practice is directed to their expulsion. They stop eating and working, and use vegetable medicines mostly; the patient bargains beforehand about the price and time of cure. They vaccinate in both arms since 1820, and used to inoculate in the nose. They practice no more important surgical operations than teeth-pulling and cupping.

Their music, like their medicine, is peculiar. Their singing is in a kind of falsetto, produced by closing the glottis and forcing air through the nose. They use a variety of wind and stringed instruments, and drums with which they make execrable music, keeping good time, but without the least harmony: to a foreigner it is mere din and confusion. They have no knowledge of dancing, and when they saw it practised by the Portuguese, they inquired if it was for medical purposes!

The difficulty of conveying a right idea of Chinese character arises from the strange blending of intellectual attainments, and debased morals. On the whole they are beyond other Asiatics far beyond their neighbours, and yet not to be compared with the lowest Christian countries. They are educated, but their education is founded wholly on ambition. They are civilized, but their social system rests on selfishness alone. Yet, though lights and shadows are strangely mingled, society is, externally, courteous and pleasant.

But, with all their civilization, the Chinese are heathen still. The moral pollution of the nation is indescribable. They are, moreover, dishonest, cruel and cowardly; and these traits, with their difficult language, are the great obstacles to their Christianization.—*New York Paper.*

THE NIGHT OF WEEPING.

By the Rev. HORATIUS LONAR.

It is no easy matter to write a book for the family of God. Yet it is for them that these thoughts on chastisement are written.

They may be found not unsuitable for the younger brethren of the Man of Sorrows. For the way is rough, and the desert-blast is keen. Who of them can say aught regarding their prospects here, save that tribulation awaiteth them in every place as they pass along? This they must know and prepare for, grasping more firmly at every step the gracious hand that is leading them on to the kingdom, and looking up for guidance to the loving eye that rests over them with the fondest vigilance, ever bright and ever tender, whether in shadow or in sunshine, whether amid the crowds of busy life, or in the solitude of the lonely way.

It is, then, to the members of this family that this little volume is offered. They may find in it something which may not merely interest them, but may also meet their case; something too in which, perhaps, they may recognise not the voice of a stranger, but of a brother,—“a companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.” For the tones of the suffering brotherhood on earth have something in them too peculiar not to be instinctively recognized. It is said of Arabian airs that they are all plaintive. They all touch some melancholy chord, as if the wail of the desert-echo were the key-note of each melody. It is in some measure thus with the children of the kingdom,—while sojourners in this wilderness of earth.

“Their voice is ever soft,
Gentle and low.”

Sorrow has smoothed away its harshness, and breathed gentler feeling into its tones. True, it is the voice of gladness, for it is the voice of the forgiven: but still it is sorrowing gladness, calm and serious joy. Their peculiar lot as followers of a hated Lord, and their peculiar circumstances as standing in the midst of a doomed and dying world, have wrought into their spirit a deep though

serene, solemnity of expression, alike in look and voice. Hence the instinctive recognition among the brotherhood, not only of the family look, but of the family tones.

It is of family concerns that we are to speak, and in these each member has a common interest. The “household of faith” has many concerns, and no the least of these are its sorrows. These are the lot of all; and there is no member of the household but has his share in these, either in personal suffering, or in helping to bear the burden of others.

What is now written may be found suitable to all, whether actually under chastisement or not. It is, however, presented specially to those who are “in heaviness through manifold temptations,” suffering the rebuke of the Lord, passing through fire and through water, with “affliction laid upon their loins.” The bruised reed must not be broken; the smoking flax must not be quenched. The hands that hang down must be lifted up, and the feeble knees confirmed; that which is lame must not be turned out of the way but rather healed.

Our desire is to minister to the saints in the consolation and admonition of the Lord. We would seek to bear their burdens, to bind up their wounds, and to dry up at least some out of their many tears. To comfort those that mourn is not only to act in obedience to the command, “bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;” it is to walk by the side of Jesus in his visits of mercy to his suffering saints on earth; nay, it is to be fellow-workers with the Holy Ghost as the Church’s Comforter in all her tribulations and distresses.

Of these things the world knows little. Its sympathies are not with the saints, either in their sorrow or their joy. Family concerns, and especially family griefs, are not for strangers to intermeddle with. They are things too high for them. And how shall they understand them so long as they remain without? They must first come in, and take their place among the children beneath the paternal roof. And what should stay them? The gate stands open day and night. They would be welcomed in with the kindest greetings of love.

But though standing afar off from the saints, and unable to mingle its sympathies with theirs, still the world has sorrows of its own, deep and many. To grieve, and yet have no comforter; to be wounded, and yet have no healer; to be weary, and yet know no resting-place: this is the world’s hard lot.

Yet it is a self-chosen one. God did not choose it for them. They choose it for themselves. God invites, nay, pleads hard with them to quit it, yet they will not. Wretched as it is, they yet prefer it to the friendship of him with whom their heart is at enmity, and whose presence is to them a gloom and terror. Yet he continues to entreat them. He does not let them alone. The “many sorrows” which compass them about are his many messages of grace, his unwearied knockings at their fast-closed door. He writes “vanity” upon the creature, “weariness and vexation” upon earth’s best delights, that men may not place their confidence in these. Most mercifully does he hedge them about with disappointment of every form, that they may lift their eyes above this earth, and beyond these heavens, to the enduring blessedness that is at his right hand forever. With what kindness, though with seeming severity, does he mar their best friendships, that he may attract them to the communion of his own far better and everlasting companionship! With what compassion does he break in upon their misguided attachments, that he may draw them away from earth, and bind them to himself by the more blessed ties of his own far sweeter love! With what tenderness does he tear asunder the bonds of brotherhood and kindred, that he may unite them to himself in far dearer and eternal relationship! With what mercy does he overthrow their prospects of worldly wealth, and bring down their hopes of earthly power and greatness, that he may give them the heavenly treasure, and make them a “royal priesthood” to himself in the glorious kingdom of his Son! With what love does he ruin their reputation among men, breaking in pieces their good name which was their idol, that he may shew them the vanity of human praise, leading them to desire the honour that cometh from God, to know that in his favour is life, and that the light of his countenance is the very sunshine of heaven!

Oh that a weary, broken-hearted world would learn these lessons of grace! Oh that they would taste and see that God is good! Let them but come home to him. He will not mock them with shadows, nor feed them upon husks. He will satisfy their craving souls; he will turn their midnight into noon; he will give them