

When we go into the interior (he says) we claim no more than what all foreigners, having passports, enjoy by treaty, whether merchants or missionaries, travellers for pleasure, or scientific explorers—namely, exemption from the cruel and arbitrary rule of the mandarins. But we do not thus put ourselves above the law; for the condition printed on every British passport is that, if the bearer break the laws, he is liable to be arrested and sent to the nearest consul to be judged and punished.

Protestant missionaries have never claimed for their converts exemption from Chinese law, and would not accept such a privilege if offered them. I do not imagine you mean to charge us with any such thing; but possibly some of your readers may have supposed the remarks about Roman Catholic missions to be meant for Protestants too.

The proposed rule, excluding women from church, cannot be justified even on Chinese principles. For the supposed separation of the sexes in China is practically very partial, except among the upper classes; and in the ordinary business of every-day life they have far more free intercourse than is permitted in Protestant chapels.

Besides the monstrous proposals proposed of above, the Circular asks that no teaching be permitted which is contrary to the doctrine of Confucius; that no foreigner is to be allowed to accuse the instigator or abettor of a crime, or to demand damages; that no missionary is ever to make any representation to show the innocence of a christian falsely accused of crimes; that no new convert can be baptised till a mandarin has examined him, and has certified that there is no obstacle to his becoming a Christian; that missionaries are to kneel and knock their heads on the ground (just as the literati do) before high mandarins. It also prescribes rules for passports, that would generally have abolished passports, in recent years, almost entirely; and proposes conditions for buying or renting houses for chapels that are virtually prohibitory. These conditions include the recognition of the *Fung-shu*—a miserable superstition never yet recognised by the Powers—which is the most effectual argument against railways, telegraphs, mines, and all such improve-

ments. Such are a few of the most glaring faults of the proposed regulations, and the catalogue is far from complete; and even those rules which seem good at first sight, are generally found, on examination, to be marred by some fatal flaw, or some plausible but unwarrantable application.

The preamble itself, on which the regulations rest, is throughout fallacious; for if your space permitted, I could easily prove that trade and political feeling (not missions) have been the causes of almost every difficulty; that in every case where serious acts of violence have been committed against Protestant missions, the cause has been traced to the literati or the mandarins; and that, when they have endeavoured to give a plausible color to these attacks, so as to stir up the people against us, they have never ventured to charge us with any such illegal acts as are in this Circular laid at the door of the Roman Catholics, but have only used vile, absurd, and incredible calumnies about poisoning or bewitching patients, violating corpses, and committing abominations such as those contained in the 'Death-blow to Corrupt Doctrine' (a book against us, circulated secretly by the Chinese officials), which is so unspeakably abominable that its own impurity screens it from the possibility of exposure in the publications of a Christian land. I could prove also, from my own experience of fifteen years in China, as well as from that of all others, that the people are inclined to be friendly to us, except when thus deluded and incited by the vile calumnies of the literary and governing classes.

In conclusion, I would repeat the warning which I have elsewhere given, that this is not a mere missionary question. The attack, while apparently directed against missions, is really against all foreign interests. If our Government could be so careless and shortsighted as to allow the treaty to be nullified in regard to the clauses in question, as the result (be it observed) of systematic misrepresentation and organised opposition on the part of the Chinese governing classes, this would certainly encourage them to use the same policy to nullify the other clauses of the treaty. For though the plausible sophisms of the Circular at first misled some even of the