

Their converts were very numerous in China, it was only by unrelenting persecutions that the spread of their labors were blotted out in that country. One of the adherents of their faith, the celebrated Prester John, founded a Christian empire in Tartary. This activity prevailed for nearly a thousand years, though in different degrees at different periods; and at one time there were numbered no less than twenty-five metropolitan Sees of the Nestorian faith.

In what manner they became reduced by the all-conquering Moslem sword, till the fertile traces of their services melted, probably to their mountain fastnesses for their preservation, there is not space here to describe. Previous to the visit to them of Messrs. Smull and Dought in 1830, they had become almost lost to the Christian world. They were then about 140,000 in number, of whom 40,000 resided on the plain, and the rest among the mountains. No traces of priests were found in their churches, fewer superstitious rites prevailed among them than among any of the oriental sects, the Bible was regarded by them as the automatic appeal in all matters of faith, though copies of it were very rare, and could be read still more rarely with understanding. Except in a few instances, none but the ecclesiastics could read, and such a thing as a woman being taught was unknown. The language of the Nestorians is a modern dialect of the ancient Syriac. Their sacred books are nearly all written in the ancient Syriac, the language, it is supposed, which was in use in Syria in the time of Christ; and it is in part so different that they use a language as closely connected with modern Greek, as well with the ancient, that they rest their claim of being the descendants of the Jews.

Stations.—Mr. Perkins received his appointment to the Nestorians in 1833, but did not take up his abode among them till two years later. What welcome was given him and his fellow-labourers who have since gone there, how greatly God has blessed their labors, how delightfully that same missionary character which distinguished them in former times is manifesting their zeal, and the progress of their cause, may be learned from 'Dr. Perkins's Residence in Persia,' and from the 'Herald.'

Oromiah is a city of about 20,000 inhabitants. It is situated on a slight elevation about ten miles west of the lake and within two miles of the mountains. Among the Persians it is renowned as being the birth-place of Zoroaster. Gardens of vast extent surround the city on every side. The missionary station is a little out of the city, *say* is a mile farther from the city, at an elevation of nearly one thousand feet above the plain, in a situation at once grand and beautiful, commanding a view of the city, lake and plain, and indeed of the whole province.

Welcome to a returning Missionary.—When, three years ago, ill health obliged Mr. Stoddard to leave his labors for a season, many of the Nestorians accompanied them out of the city, holding their horses by the bridle, and begging them with tears not to leave them. On his return, in June, these same persons went forth to meet him, some of them as far as Gawain, thirty miles from Oromiah, and still greater numbers as the distance grew less, till the way was almost blocked up by them,—some on foot, some on horse, *prests*, deacons, teachers, pupils, all eagerly pressing forward to take him and his companions by the hand and bid them welcome.

Contrast.—Six years ago, when the seminary at Seir was placed under the care of Mr. Stoddard, he found very much to exerce his powers that the enterprise would be unsuccessful. Not one of the students was pious; none, confusion and insubordination prevailed; habits of lying and theft were almost universal; and there was an indifference to religious truth. What a change has God wrought! Not a few have gone forth as preachers, and deliver the messages of salvation in graphic language and with an unaffected unction, and they are eager to traverse the plain and penetrate the mountains that they may make full proof of their ministry. Still others are teachers of common schools, many of them being pious. Thirty of the present members of the school (about three-fourths of the whole number) comfort the hearts of their teachers by their consistent and prayerful deportment; and the same diligence and honest industry are strikingly manifest in them all. Although there is only the ordinary religious interest in the school, a stranger who should happen in at the prayer-meeting and more especially who should stand near the range of prayer-rooms as they were retiring, would be likely to think he was in the midst of a revival, so fervent and effectual would he find the supplications of these youth, many of whom were brought up among thieves, liars and murderers. Every Sabbath some of them go out to the adjacent villages to tell the story of redeeming love.

New Station.—About seventy miles northwest from Oromiah, in the mountains, is the 'great and beautiful plain of Gawar, hemmed in and overhung by some of the wildest and boldest Koordish ranges.' This district contains only twenty villages, but within a day's ride from any central point are sixty-nine more. On the south-west side of the plain, at the base of the great Jeloo mountains, and on the thoroughfare to the mountains beyond, is Marwan, a village of Deacon Tamo and of the parents of Guweran. It has but fifty or sixty inhabitants, but these have received much religious instruction from Deacon Tamo, and look with favor on having missionaries dwell among them. In this village Mr. Coan and his family and Mr. Rhea took up their abode, November 22, and have thus formed a station among 'the mountains.' Their first accommodations let Mr. C. describe. 'The houses of Gawar are burrows in the earth, with a hole over head to admit the light and allow the escape of smoke, where the owners, cattle, sheep, goats, hens, vermin, men, women and children, dwell at a distance from the entrance. We have succeeded in obtaining a place under Deacon Tamo's roof, shut off from the other occu-

pants of the house. Our chests have thus far served for a bedstead at night and a table by day, but we never slept more soundly or ate with more cheerful hearts than now. Our floor is the earth and our carpeting is hay, but we hope ere long to be more comfortable in some of these respects.'

A few weeks later Messrs. Stocking and Stoddard, in making them a visit, encountered a cold of such depth that they were four hours in accomplishing eight miles, and the thermometer stood one morning at zero, and the next, four degrees lower. But, say they, 'It was pleasant to find them so happy in their remote and self-denying situation, and so ready to sing of the loving-kindness of the Lord.'

This measure of forming a new station is one of great importance. If God shall prosper the undertaking, the good will ere long be an extensively preached and enjoyed among the mountains of the plain, and what has been witnessed at Great Tapa and other places, as it shall be repeated in three secluded villages, will cause joy among the angels in the presence of God.—*Journal of Miss.*

#### PAINS THE HEATHENS TAKE TO GET TO HEAVEN.

They are very great; they are continued unintermittingly during life, they are sometimes exceedingly painful and expensive, and in most, if not in all cases, they are done with the utmost sincerity. The heathen expect to reach heaven by their good works, and as most of them have an idea that it is a place of happiness and freedom from pain, they take up little trouble to secure this mode of joy, and are not at all prepared to have it known that this is their object. As much as the Evil One who leads these pagans captive in his toils, knows that all their efforts to secure heaven will fail at last, the impression and full conviction that heaven is to be obtained by good works is not at all disturbed in their minds. It is a kind of reproach to Christians to hear of the immense sums lavished on idolatrous festivals and temples by the rich in heathen lands, and compare them with the small contributions of those who "have been bought with a price" but if the latter believed they could reach heaven with money, plenty of it would be expended. The heathen does not give his money, nor afflict himself, without an object, he does not throw his child into the Granges, nor himself under the wheels of a car to be crushed, without an adequate conviction that the price is commensurate with the object. The series of idolatrous ceremonies required by the ritual of paganism is so minute, too, that religion mixes itself up in every thing, and the presence of the idolatrous symbols in the house and by the way, at the temple and in the shop, everywhere rears this great object of life.

It is estimated that about four hundred millions of dollars are annually expended in China for religious purposes, such as the erection and repairs of temples, worship of the dead, and expenses of festivals; and when the object, the ultimate object of the outlay of this large sum is sought out, it resolves itself into a desire to secure happiness and heaven after death and an anxiety to avoid pain. In most of the cases, the price is a permanent, but either side of the motive—to reach heaven, or avoid hell—amounts to the same thing. What an impelling motive must that be in the human breast, which constantly urges our fellowmen, in pagan countries, even on the slight dictum of another as ignorant as they are, to make the sacrifices they do to reach heaven. We see, too, when Christianity loses its vitality in mummeries of formalism, the same principle is exhibited, and good works are piled on each other,—money, time, sufferings, prayings, forms,—all lavished, in endless variety, to win the golden prize. The proverb, "As face answereth to face, in water, so does the heart of man to man," is herein exemplified.

As soon as one begins to press home to a Chinese mind, for instance, the attainment of Christ and belief in him, as the only means of winning this prize, he balks at there being nothing to do, no works to perform, no penal ceremonies to go through. "Confucius taught us," he says, "not to lie, not to steal, nor to kill, and not to obey our parents; and he was a holy man: why do you only say, believe in Jesus? I never shall one believe in Jesus!" Here the power of man stops; for God the Spirit can only teach the poor soul how to believe in Jesus. Few have got so far as to ask this question, and this great mass of human beings, "living without God and without hope in the world," are taking so much pains to get to heaven by performing good works, that it is a tacit reproach to those people in Christian lands, who know that this happy land cannot be reached by this road, and yet hardly think of the usefulness of any way for them to reflect to see millions thus earnest and pains-taking. It is a serious thought, that of the thrifts of Chinese who will be found on the left side of the Judge at the last day, (more of them than of any other one nation by far,) almost all of them took great pains, spent much money, and thought much, to get to heaven after death,—and all missed their object for ever.—*Journal of Miss.*

#### CALABAR.

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM REV. MR. WADELL.

"The opposite of benevolence, is selfishness, embodied in the phrase, 'Every man for himself;' and which is one of the great and universally prevalent sins of humanity. Selfishness, however necessary, for we must love ourselves, that we may love our neighbours as ourselves. But if wholly confined to ourselves, then it becomes utter and bare selfishness. This