

A few are anxious about the future, and give themselves diligently to making merit by reading prayers, abstaining from animal food, and making pilgrimages to celebrated temples, that they may attain some future good—they know not what.

Parents die, and their children follow them to the grave with a despairing wail,—would that every Christian in the world could hear it!—‘Oh, my father, my mother! I shall never, never see your face again.’ A little child dies. If it be a first-born, or an only remaining child, its mother wraps it in a piece of matting, or a bundle of straw, and sends it out into the fields to be thrown where the dogs will devour it. This she does, not because she has no mother-love in her heart, but because she suppose that in this way only she can propitiate the unseen, cruel power that has taken away her child, and thus secure the life of the next that shall be born.

A young woman is married. As soon as the wedding festivities are over she takes the place of a slave in the family. She is to do the bidding of her husband and his parents, all of whom have a right to beat her if she displeases them. All the hard, disagreeable work in the household falls to her lot. When she has cooked the food, the men of the family eat first. After them the mother and her daughters eat. The daughter-in-law, with her children, may have what is left. In poor families, meagre enough is her share. Her husband is not to show her any token of affection or sympathy, for that is a slight to his mother.

There is no word in the vernacular to marry, nor any name for wife. A man does not marry a wife, but ‘adds a daughter-in-law.’ Is it any wonder that many young wives are driven to suicide? Only the Gospel has ever raised women above slavery. O, happy wife of true, loving husband, dearer than life to him, can you forget those Chinese daughters-in-law? What have you done that you should be so blessed above them? Oh, toiling or afflicted Christian, well acquainted with the great Burden-bearer, who always lightens your burden, or gives us strength to bear it, bring to Him in your prayers those that ‘labour, and are

heavy laden,’ but have never heard the blessed invitation, ‘Come unto Me.’ Oh, sorrowing orphan, whose parents are present with the Lord, where in bliss yet expect to meet them, did you ever think what it meant to ‘sorrow as those which have no hope?’ Remember that mournful wail, ‘I shall never see your face again,’ and pity those despairing mourners. Christian mother, whose lambs have been gathered into the upper fold, think of that heathen mother sending away the body of her darling to be thrown a sacrifice to the dogs, and hear her exceeding bitter cry, ‘Oh, my child! my child! I shall never see your face again!’ The present generation may not be to blame that China is now heathen, but it will be to blame if Christianity is not there made very extensively known.

CLAIMS OF THE CHINESE UPON US.

China is the largest and most powerful of the heathen nations. Christian governments have compelled her to make treaties with them, and thus brought her into the sisterhood of nations. Her people are intelligent, shrewd, ingenious, patient, persistent.

The education of woman is looked upon with considerable favour; literary ladies are highly respected, and the list of Chinese authoresses is already quite a long one. The esteem in which educated women are held is encouraging to Missionary effort among them, as it is not necessary to overcome prejudice as well as ignorance.

The Chinese have given a literature to Annam, Corea, and Japan. They have made their way throughout all the East Indies. Even in progressive Japan they are taking places of trust and emolument out of the hands of the natives. In America, capitalists, who are anti-Chinese in theory, are employing Chinese labourers, because of their patient industry. America is China's nearest Christian neighbour. Can any Christian be indifferent to the spiritual wants of such a nation and such a people, and be guiltless of the blood of souls? The command is, ‘Go, preach!’ The promise is, ‘All the ends of the world shall turn unto the Lord.’ When the promise shall have been fulfilled, who of us can afford to feel that we have not done our part? n