

'practicing virtue,' and is considered a mode of laying up merit. If the year is a good one people do not apply for soup, the poorest of them having as good or better at home; but, all the same, the donors advertise their intentions to practice virtue; and when the day ends and no one has asked for a bowl of the soup it is put into the broken jars out of which the pigs are fed, and the benevolent man closes his door feeling that he has been virtuous for the year. The narrow range of Chinese charity is shown by the circumstance that asylums for the weak-minded and insane, for the deaf and dumb, for varieties of disease, do not exist, and would remind a Chinaman of nothing he ever saw or heard of. Chinese benevolence, indeed, has no heart in it; 'that state of mind, in which practical philanthropy becomes an instinct, demanding opportunity to exhibit its workings, whenever the need of it is clearly perceived, may be said to be almost wholly wanting among the Chinese.'"

We cannot but think this Chinese custom a parable for Christian nations. In our churches our benevolent uprisings are too often suppressed, and wait for the annual collection, when a dish of weak soup dealt out to perishing millions is supposed to atone for the year's neglect.—A. T. P.

Heathen and Christian Giving. Idolaters, whether from fear of their false gods, or from the hope of physical, pecuniary or social gains, give far more to support heathenism than Christians give to maintain and propagate the true faith. Dr. Scudder, long a missionary in India, says: "The offerings made by the heathen to support their idolatry are far greater than those which are made by Christians to honor their divine Master." Rev. J. L. Douglass, writing from Rangoon, Burmah, says: "The whole length of the empire is consecrated to idolatry. The people spend thousands of dollars for pagodas, and only tens for their own homes." Rev. Mr. Noyes of China reports, in addition to the vast sums paid for the support of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taonism, more than \$200,000,000 spent annually by the Chinese for the worship of ancestors. He furnishes important data in the *Chinese Recorder*, the results of careful investigation. Of nine persons he gives the annual income of each, the yearly amount given to idolatry, and the ratio—thus:

No. 1, income, \$120; given to idolatry, \$20.30; ratio, almost one-quarter. No. 2, income, \$60; given to idolatry, \$14.84; ratio, almost one-quarter. No. 3, income, \$84; given to idolatry, \$21.48; ratio, more than one-quarter. No. 4, income, \$60; given to idolatry, \$21.63; ratio, more than one third. No. 5, income, \$38.33½; given to idolatry, \$7.31; ratio, more than one-

fifth. No. 6, income, \$54; given to idolatry, \$12.20; ratio, more than one-fifth. No. 7, income, \$60.60¾; given to idolatry, \$12.72; ratio, less than one-fifth. No. 8, income, \$133.33¾; given to idolatry, \$25.11; ratio, less than one-fifth. No. 9, income, \$48; given to idolatry, \$20.22; ratio, less than two-fifths.

Rev. J. L. Atkinson of Kobe, Japan, gives an account of a Japanese family which worshiped the god *Kannin Daimiyo-jin-san*. In Japan, as in China and India, it is common to have a god for almost every object and virtue, and this very self-denying family had chosen the one named. The master of the house, on being questioned, gave the following account of the practice of his household:

"From ancient times my family has believed in and worshiped 'the great bright god of self-restraint.' We have also made a box, and called it 'the self-restraint box,' for the reception of first-fruits and other percentages, all of which are offered to our god. As to percentages, this is our mode of proceeding: If I would buy a dollar garment, I manage by self-restraint and economy to get it for eighty cents, and the remaining twenty cents I drop into the 'self-restraint box'; or, if I would give a five-dollar feast to my friends, I exercise self-restraint and economy and give it for four, dropping the remaining dollar into the box; or, if I determine to build a house that shall cost one hundred dollars, I exercise self-restraint and economy and build it for eighty, putting the remaining twenty dollars into the box as an offering to *Kannin Daimiyo-jin-san*. And it is always my purpose thus to make an offer to my god twenty per cent. of everything, by the exercise of the virtues of self-restraint and economy. In proportion to my annual outlays the sum in this box is large or small. This year my outlays have been large; hence, by the practice of the virtues named, the amount in the 'self-restraint box' is great. Yet, notwithstanding this, we are living in comfort, peace and happiness."

Some native Christians in Japan, China, and India equal or exceed the ratios already quoted in giving to support the gospel, but most of them fall very much below. A striking feature of the proceedings of the Missionary Conferences at Calcutta and Osaka was the confession of certain missionaries of their failure to do their full duty in this respect, and their resolve to act differently in the future. Already very marked results appear in the increased liberality of the native churches.

But the converts in the Foreign Mission fields have given more to the cause of Christ, in proportion to their means, than Christian people at home. While many of the latter have abounded in the grace of giving, yet the withholding more than is meet is the rule, and the liberal givers are the exceptions. One cause of this is that many of the clergy do not educate their people in this duty. Bishop Stevens says:

"When I first went to Philadelphia as rector of a church there, I was called upon to present a great object to my congregation. I did so, knowing that they were wealthy, and expecting from them a liberal response. Afterward I called on several individuals, one a rich gentleman, who, after some hesitation, promised me fifty dollars. Noticing my surprise, he said: 'I see you are disappointed.' 'I am; I expected a thousand dollars.' 'Well,' replied he, 'I have not been educated to give.' I said, 'You shall never have cause to say that again.