

Of every six widows in the world, one is mourning in India. When Mrs. Armstrong was laboring amongst these women, she sought for a winding sheet to prepare one for burial. The question was asked her, "Was she saint or sinner?" meaning, was she married or a widow. If the latter, she would not be buried in cloth of such quality as if living with a husband.

Their suffering comes also from another source. They have suffered much as a result of the opium traffic. In a letter addressed by them to the Christian women of England, they say: "We have heard on good, undoubted authority that the sale of opium is conducted under the strictest restrictions possible throughout Great Britain, and it is only permitted to be sold by licensed chemists in good standing and in small quantities, but here in India it is placed within the reach of all, without any restrictions to speak of; even the commonest women have access to it at all times. Why is this? Can it be that our souls are reckoned without any value in your country?"

What a piteous cry this is that our benighted sisters send to us across the waters. Is it any wonder that it used to be said that in India the birds never sang, the flowers have no fragrance, and the women never smile?

In China the condition of woman is alike deplorable, though they are not, perhaps, so degraded as those we have been speaking of. She does not live the secluded life of some of her sisters, nor is the system of caste present with its evils, but she is one who has no control over her own time or possessions; does not dare to call her soul her own. She is a menial, accepting the scraps from the table of her lord as her just portion. There are few, if any, who can read or write. Ignorance is one of her virtues.

One theory given for the practice of binding the feet of the women is, that it was to prevent their going about and so making mischief. The custom is a cruel one. During the first year or two the victim suffers intense pain, but after that they are able to hobble a little on their heels. They have been taught that large feet are immoral, so they bear the pain silently, and the smaller the feet the better, some of them being no longer than $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The women of Japan are favored still more than any of these we have mentioned, but the life led by those of the upper class is an aimless one, and amongst the lower it is a common sight to see them at work in the fields. The marriage vow is held lightly. For such causes as disobedience, theft, impoliteness to a mother-in-law, a man may receive a divorce from his wife.

These are but a few customs of some of the nations who know not God, but it gives us some faint idea as to the condition of affairs in all lands upon which the pall of darkness rests, and whose dusky daughters stand with outstretched hands, crying, "Come over and help us."

Let us now pass from this to the second phase of the subject, namely, "Their Moral Condition." Dr. Pope says, that by the term Christian Ethics is signified that system of moral teaching which Christ introduced in connection with His atoning work, and the general economy of His grace. The standard, then, of morality in the Christian system is based on the revelation which the All-wise Creator has given to man for the proper regulation and guidance of his life.

Heathen lands have their code of morals as well as Christian, but the social, moral and religious customs are so intermingled that it is difficult to detach one from the other and discuss any one alone. The Mohammedan code was given by Mohammed. Confucius shaped the moral system for the greater portion of China. The standard given by Islam gave credence to practices which were in themselves immoral. These were not only taught, but practised by the great teacher himself, laying a foundation for gross immorality for all his followers. The scriptures which the Moslem holds divine, sanction indulgences which are in themselves immoral, and from the first have upheld sinful practices, which have been offered as inducements which helped materially to forward the spread of the faith.

Lane tells us that in Egypt he has known men who have been in the habit of marrying a new wife almost every month, and a follower of Mohammed, after making a pilgrimage to the holy places, writes thus: "Women frequently contract as many as ten marriages, and those who

have only been married twice are few in number." Girls are bought and sold like animals, whenever their master wills. Woman is utterly degraded, and almost the last vestige of her womanhood crushed out of her.

In China and Japan the worst kind of slavery exists, that which kills both body and soul. In Japan prostitution has the arm of the law to defend it, and each year thousands are swallowed up in this infernal whirlpool. In China this iniquity exists also. We have brought before our notice every little while accounts of the infamous traffic which is carried on on our very coasts—Chinese girls are entrapped or sold, then brought to this country to suffer worse than death. We, to whom our purity and honor is dearer than life, who have been lifted to such a high platform of moral chastity, think of these our sisters, stranded on this moral wreck. Can we realize how much Christianity has done for us and comprehending it somewhat, reach out our hands to lift up these fallen ones, that they, too, may rise to the dignity which God has ordained for them.

In India there are troops of dancing girls called "God's Slaves," who are dedicated to the service of the temple, and who are indeed slaves, not to honor, but dishonor. They are promised, sometimes before birth, to the god or goddess of the temple, and there is no escape from the terrible fate which is in store for them. The seclusion of women in zenanas and in harems, all tend to a moral depression, out of which they can never rise until the Son of Righteousness sheds His light and glory upon them.

Thus it will ever be until this low system of morals is superseded by that higher system which Christ introduced, the teaching of which is, that our bodies as well as our spirits belong to God, and that he that defileth the body, him will God destroy.

We now come to the third and last head, namely, "Their Spiritual Condition." Kant defines religion as the recognition of all our duties as Divine commands. Another says, an acknowledgement of our obligation to God as our Creator, with a feeling of reverence and consequent duty or obedience to Him. All countries have their religious systems, false or true. "Salvation in the Christian system, denotes deliverance, not only from the punishment of sin, but from its power, implying a renovation of the moral nature. The entire man is to be rectified, in heart, speech, and behaviour. The perfection of the individual, and, through that, the perfection of society, are the objects aimed at; and the consummation desired, is the doing the will of God on earth as it is done in Heaven."

We find no such grand ideal in another religion, no system which lifts and elevates as does the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the lowly Nazarene. In life our Christianity brightens the way, brings peace to the heart. In death, it comforts the one passing away to the bourne from which no man returns, with a hope of a blessed resurrection and being forever with Christ. Not so with other religions. In them there is no happiness for this life, nothing to hope for beyond. There are 300,000,000 Buddhist women who believe that they have no soul, but will become bugs and insects after death, or theirs may be the good fortune, if they have obeyed their mother-in-law implicitly, to be born men.

The great tenet in the religion of the women of Hinduism is, "Existence is misery." After death nothing brighter, for the soul is believed to pass from one stage to another and it is lost in God as a drop mingles with the ocean. The system of idolatry prevails, and it is sustained by immense sums of money, which keep its votaries in poverty. The rites are cruel in the extreme, human sacrifices often being offered to appease the gods. A Hindu on being asked if there was anything they all agreed upon, answered, "Yes, in the sanctity of the cow and the utter depravity of a woman." See, said a sick child in India, "The Goddess Kalis' bloody tongue, wicked face, cruel hands and necklace of skulls; our gods are terrible, I cannot help screaming when I see them." Surely there is desolation and woe here, utter darkness in the soul, no life—out, out they go into the blackness of night.

The cry of the Mohammedan woman is "There is no God but one God and Mahomet is His prophet"; but a faith in God and Christ is unknown. It is a system of